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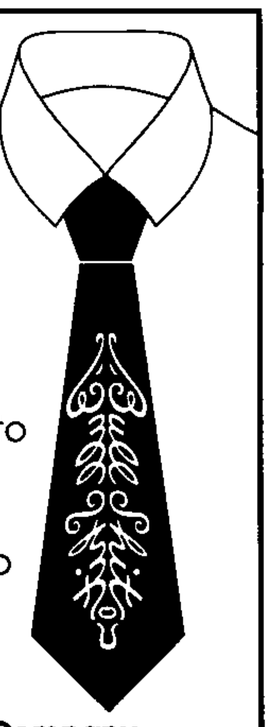

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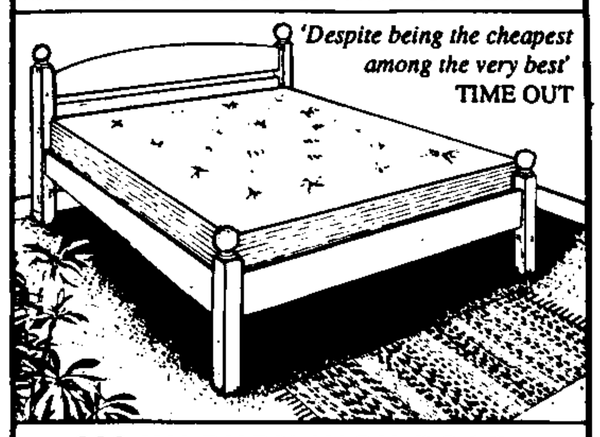

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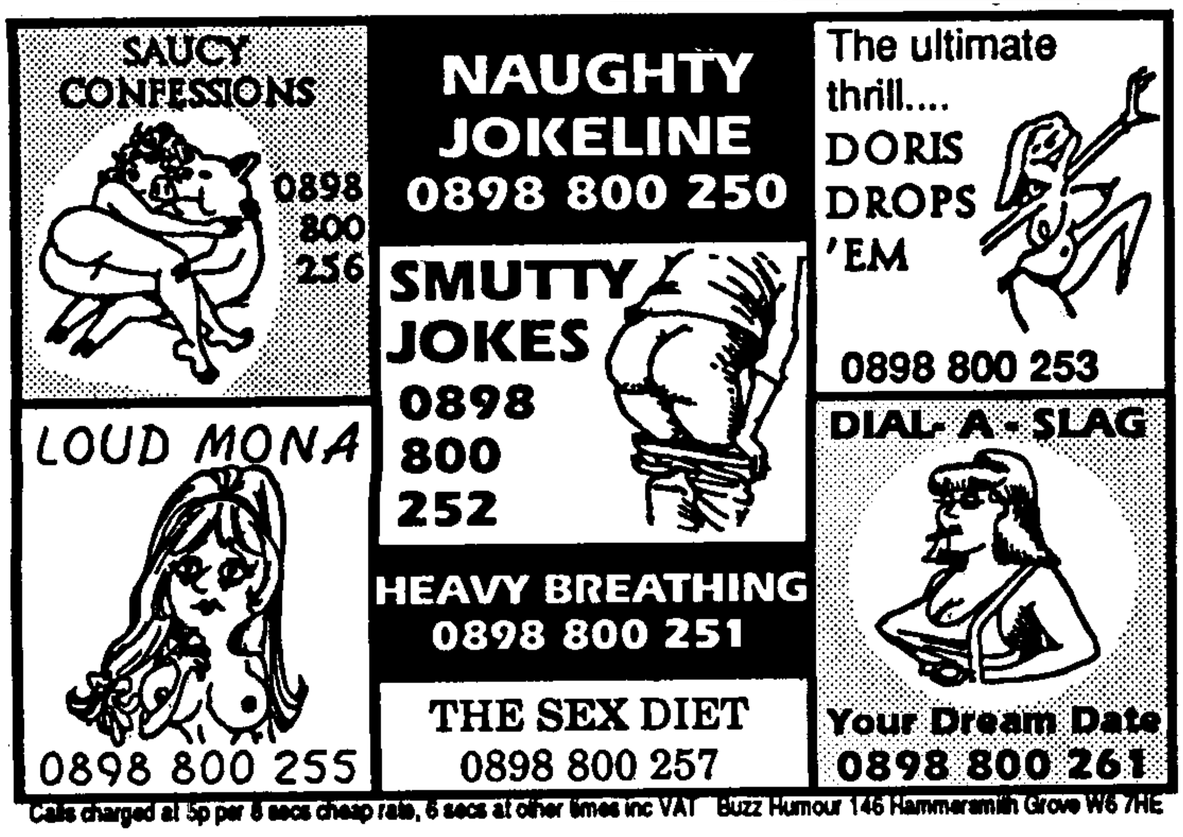

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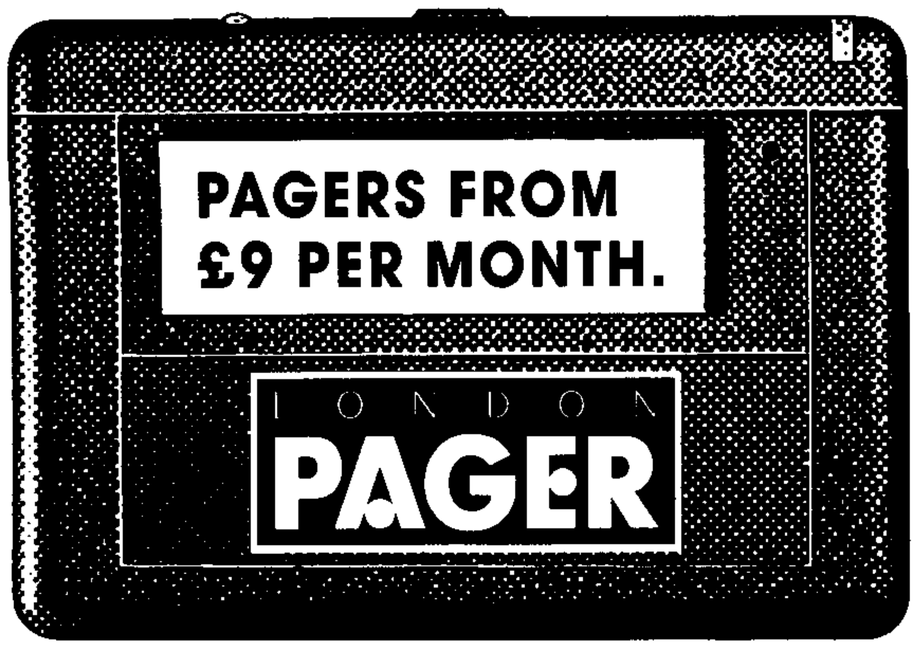

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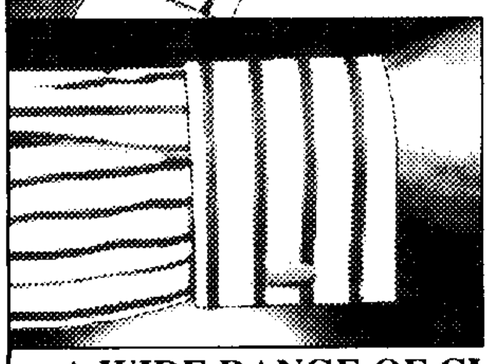

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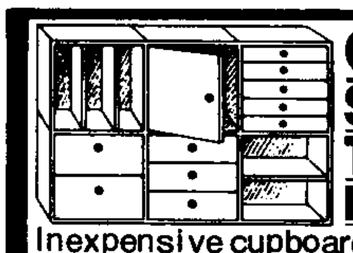

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I myself had an independent lunch with Mr John Smith, the Shadow Chancellor, and was forced to conclude that though personally very pleasant, he was actually criminally insane.

To take an example from Gnomura's exhaustive analysis, consider the effect of a Labour Government on an average worker – say someone in the City, earning an average £400,000 per annum with an average 2.4 wives (*shurely 'cars'? Ed*).

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And what about the effect on an average firm – say, a City company that does a lot of work on takeovers and Government privatisations.

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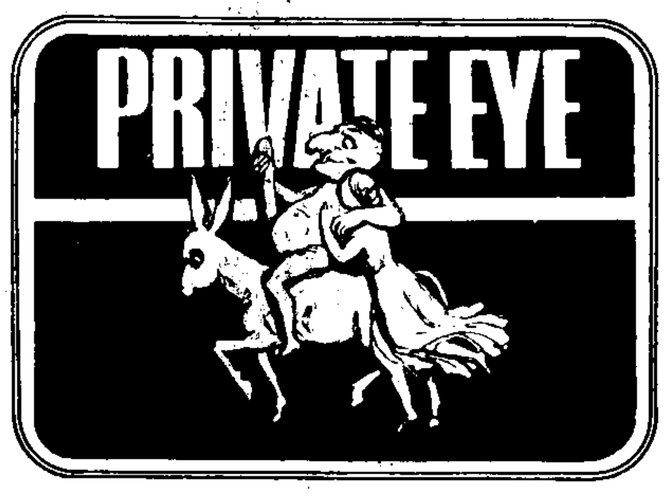


COLOUR SECTION

THE REPERCUSSIONS following the release of Stefan Kiszko, wrongly jailed for 16 years for a murder he did not commit, are just beginning.

Back in June 1990, Dr Edward Tierney, the police surgeon who ordered the sperm tests that led to Kiszko's belated release, wrote to David Waddington, the then home secretary.

In his letter Dr Tierney outlined his impartial views that were, strangely enough, at odds with those of the Crown Prosecution Service. His reward for freeing an innocent man after 16 years in prison has been swift: Greater Manchester Police have terminated his contract and there is no appeal.

Waddington QC, now Tory leader in the House of Lords, of course knew a great deal about the case having been Kiszko's defence barrister. He, along with the prosecuting barrister at the time — Sir Peter Taylor, the new lord chief justice — are now to be interviewed by police investigating this latest miscarriage of justice.

While Waddington's defence of Kiszko has been loudly criticised, no one has yet drawn attention to the curious anomaly by which Waddington was able to become a QC in the first place.

He became a barrister in 1951 and a QC in 1971, having been elected to Parliament in 1968. Barristers who become MPs are entitled to ask to be granted the dignity of QCs — what John Moritmer's Horace Rumpole calls "artificial silks", since forensic skills play no part in their elevated status.

Rumpole is even more suspicious of artificial silks who sit on the bench as recorders, which is what Waddington sometimes did after 1972. The reason, according to Rumpole, is that their defendant clients often suffer because of their too cosy relationship with prosecution counsel.

Back in reality, as opposed to the world of television drama, Mr Kiszko clearly landed a dud barrister who failed to pursue a not guilty plea for his client (thus challenging his client's "confession" and presenting the alibi given by his mother and aunt), and instead advanced a plea of manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility — against the wishes of Mr Kiszko and his family.

Kiszko's release is bound to give Waddington cause for thought: as a fervent backer of capital punishment, he can ponder what might have happened to Kiszko if a hanging judge had let him have it.

ANYONE wondering just how Norman Lamont could get away with such a vote-buying budget should consider some recent history.

Sir Terry Burns, the dominant figure inside the treasury for 12 years, did not believe, as late as June 1987, that Britain was plunging into "serious inflation". This was three months after the disastrous Lawson budget which had cut income tax in order to win the general election.

The revelation has been made in a little-noticed letter, published in the *Financial Times*, from Sir Douglas Hague, who was economic adviser to Mrs Thatcher. He wrote in response to a profile of Sir Terry which had referred to a conversation between the two men in 1987.

Sir Douglas said that he had told Sir Terry that the rate of growth of economic activity was unsustainably high and that this would lead to serious inflation. "Sir Terence took the view that since house prices were not rising significantly all was reasonably well. To this I replied that unless policy were changed house prices *would* begin to rise rapidly but that by then it would be too late to avoid serious problems. Your readers will be able to judge which of us was nearer the truth."

At that time, almost everyone realised that Lawson had engineered a pre-election spending boom to win votes. Until now, no one on the inside had even hinted that the treasury did not realise what its leader was up to. Sir Terence became chief economic adviser to the treasury in 1980 and last year was actually promoted to be permanent secretary. Did he notice anything this time?

ONE OF the many irritations in the offices of George Bush and his admirer, John Major, is that plans to teach a "short, sharp lesson" to Libya to boost their dreadful showing in the polls may be foiled.

President Bush's plan was to bomb Tripoli and other Libyan targets in reprisal for Colonel Gadaffi's refusal to extradite the two Libyan officials named by the US justice department and the Scottish lord advocate's department as suspects for the Lockerbie bombing.

The case against the two men is not strong; its essential weakness being the previous insistence of both US and British governments that the bombing was carried out by a Palestinian group, funded and inspired by the Iranians. However, Bush and his advisers were certain Gadaffi would never release the two men.

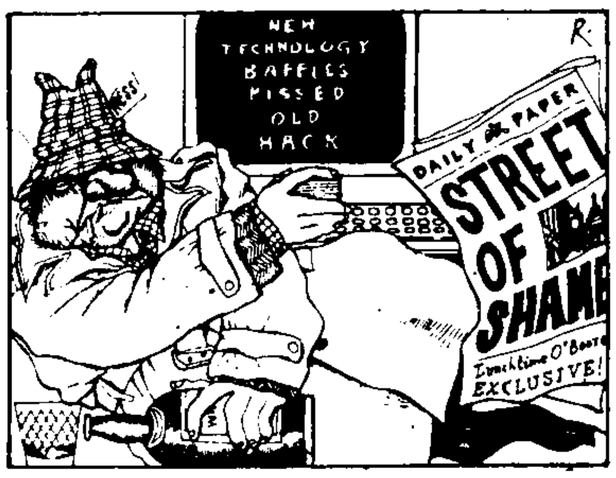
Colonel Gadaffi may be mad — but he's not stupid. Major promised a resolution at the UN security council by the end of February at the latest, but Libyan manoeuvres have pushed the deadline further back, threatening to deprive at least Major of an electorally inspired anti-terrorist move.

By simultaneously sending the case to the International Court of Justice — and telling the UN that he would be prepared to consider handing over the two accused to the Americans in return for better diplomatic relations, Gadaffi has made it very difficult for the west to win a majority in the security council.

Calling for a trial in a neutral court in a neutral country makes things even more difficult. The British courts' record on terrorist trials probably rules them out, and the US courts are even having trouble pinning anything on General Noriega. So Gadaffi's offer looks reasonable enough for all the Third World delegates on the security council to get cold feet about any "UN reprisals".

Perhaps the west will have to think about another dictator who is a rather harder target. Remember Saddam Hussein?

"It's just a PR exercise"



***TIMES* editor Simon Jenkins has been taken to task by "Sir" Nicholas Lloyd for not being loyal enough to the Tory cause.**

"We," said Lloyd at a jolly threesome lunch with John Major (who was comparatively silent), "think it is high time you pulled your socks up."

THE extraordinary ability of Robert Maxwell's former henchmen to hang on to their jobs at the *Mirror* has taken a remarkable new twist.

A prominent and militant member of the new staff committee formed to fight for the pensions which Maxwell stole is Les Williams, the deputy circulation manager. *Eye* readers will recall that Mr Williams's rise to managerial prominence at the *Mirror* was swift and may have had something to do with the fact that he first came to the *Mirror* as Maxwell's chauffeur.

THE CARING decision by the "socialists" on the board of Mirror Group Newspapers to jettison a few thousand members of its pension scheme comes as a bit of a surprise.

Weren't these the same directors (Charles Wilson, Ernie Burrington, Joe Haines, et al) who were until recently enthusiastically endorsing Robert Maxwell's gobbling up of smaller companies (and their pension funds)?

This desire to disassociate the Holborn Circus politburo from other parts of the Maxwell empire may yet backfire, with those made redundant at the *European* inclined towards litigation rather than compromise with their erstwhile neighbours.

More ominously still, at the hugely profitable *Scottish Daily Record*, the staff, may of whom remember bitter encounters with Haines and other Maxwell minions, are increasingly determined on a future apart from the English titles. This will gravely weaken the rest of Mirror Group (and prevent daily editor Richard Stott from adding the *Record*'s sales to those of the *Mirror* in a pathetic attempt to lessen the widening gap with the *Sun*).

A separate sale of the *Record* and its sister papers will further lessen the chances of the management buy-out headed by the invisible figure of Sir Peter Parker, already threatened by the receiver's refusal to allow a fire sale of MGN's assets.

MORE NEWS of Robert Gregory, the amusingly-titled director of human resources at the *Daily Mirror*.

Gregory, who was hired by Cap'n Bob for his expertise in sacking people (see last *Eye*), has now ordered Mirror Group galley-slaves to fill in a "Career Review" form.

Staff are expected to say what their objectives have been for the past 12 months ("hanging on to our jobs", presumably), and whether those objectives have been achieved. They will then be assessed by one of Gregory's lackeys on their "interpersonal skills" and "attitude".

What a pity Gregory will not be subjected to similar scrutiny himself.

THE EX-SAINTLY Andreas Whittam Strobes has for months been telling his staff at the *Indescribablyboring* that salaries must be frozen and editorial budgets cut because of the company's penurious financial state.

Imagine the hacks' surprise, then, when they learned two weeks ago that Strobes is planning to create a new daily newspaper in France — and is pouring *Indie* money into project. He has already hired a French editor, one Bernard Guetta, to draw up a dummy issue.

Morale at City Road has not been helped by another new wheeze, called "The Quality Initiative". This is the title of a document drawn up by three *Indie* executives — Charlie Burgess, David Marsh and Chris McKane — who were asked by Strobes for ideas to improve the paper. Their main recommendations were that the paper should run more tabloid-style news stories and take foreign affairs less seriously. They also urged the sacking of several (named) hacks.

This supposedly top-secret document was written on Marsh's computer, whence it was immediately hacked out and flashed round every computer screen in the building — including those of the unfortunate hacks whose names were on the hit-list.

PAGE 6 FELLA

My photo shows the distinguished *Sun* columnist Richard Littlejohn in an earlier incarnation as an Essex-based DJ, complete with mandarin moustache.

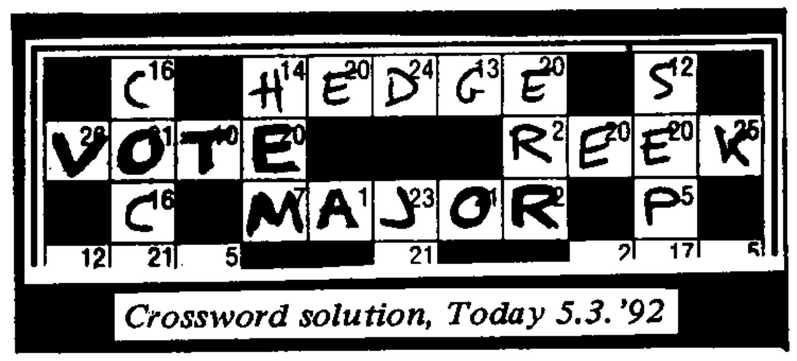
Ten years as a print journalist have changed his appearance almost as much as that of his fellow professional, Garry Bushell. The mandarin moustache may have gone, along with the leopard-skin print and the PVC jeans, while there may have been a certain subcutaneous expansion, but the coolness and sense of vision remain.

THE *Daily Telegraph*'s corpulent foreign editor, Nigel Wade, is certainly a busy boy these days.

Following Conrad Black's recent acquisition of the *Melbourne Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Wade wrote a memo for his boss outlining the shortcomings of these papers' senior staff (see *Eye* 785). Now he has turned his attention to America, where he paid a flying visit a fortnight ago to prepare the *Telegraph*'s Washington correspondents for the arrival in their office of a gaggle of hacks from the Australian newspapers.

While there he found time to sack Betty Yoklavich, who has handled office administration at the *Telegraph*'s Washington bureau for 23 years. The ever-generous Wade gave her precisely two and a half months' salary as a pay-off. When she asked about a pension, she was told that she was only "locally employed" and therefore not considered a member of the *Telegraph*'s staff.

The reason given for the sacking was that at her age (60-ish) she would not be able to cope with the Australian hacks. Presumably the *Telegraph* is unaware that age discrimination is against the law in America: Betty Yoklavich can (and, one trusts, will) take Wade and Conrad Black to court.



Crossword solution, Today 5.3.'92

AT THE *What the Papers Say* Awards, Roy Hattersley implied that investigative journalism was not as good as it was in the old days of the *Sunday Times* Insight team.

This provoked a furious letter from Andrew Neill to the *UK Press Gazette* defending his current mob. He said: "The modern Insight team has an investigative record without parallel by the old Insight team or anybody else."

Does this mean the record of the Owen Oyston catastrophe where the *Sunset Times* joined in a Tory conspiracy to smear Oyston and then paid out over a million pounds? The Carmen Proetta *Death on the Rock* disaster? The Vanunu cock-up where the nuclear expert got 18 years in an Israeli prison? The NCP investigation...

(*That's enough* Sunday Times. *Ed.*)

EDUCATION

JOHN MAJOR is keen to emphasise that he uses the National Health Service as proof of his commitment to public services. So why were his children, Elizabeth and James, sent to Kimbolton School, a private establishment near Huntingdon — especially when the local comprehensive, Hinchingbrooke (formerly Huntingdon Grammar), has such an excellent reputation?

Indeed, Hinchingbrooke School has a plaque in its foyer bearing a *Times* endorsement describing it as the finest state school in the country. The children of Major's friend and political colleague Baroness Blatch attended Hinchingbrooke while she was leader of the county council; and security at Hinchingbrooke is no more difficult than at Kimbolton.

If the reason for not sending his children to Hinchingbrooke had little to do with academic standards, could it be the fact that the school's catchment area includes a nasty 1960s housing estate, the Oxmoor, that put off the champion of the classless society? His reticence on the subject of how and why he chose to send his children to a private school is peculiar, to say the least.

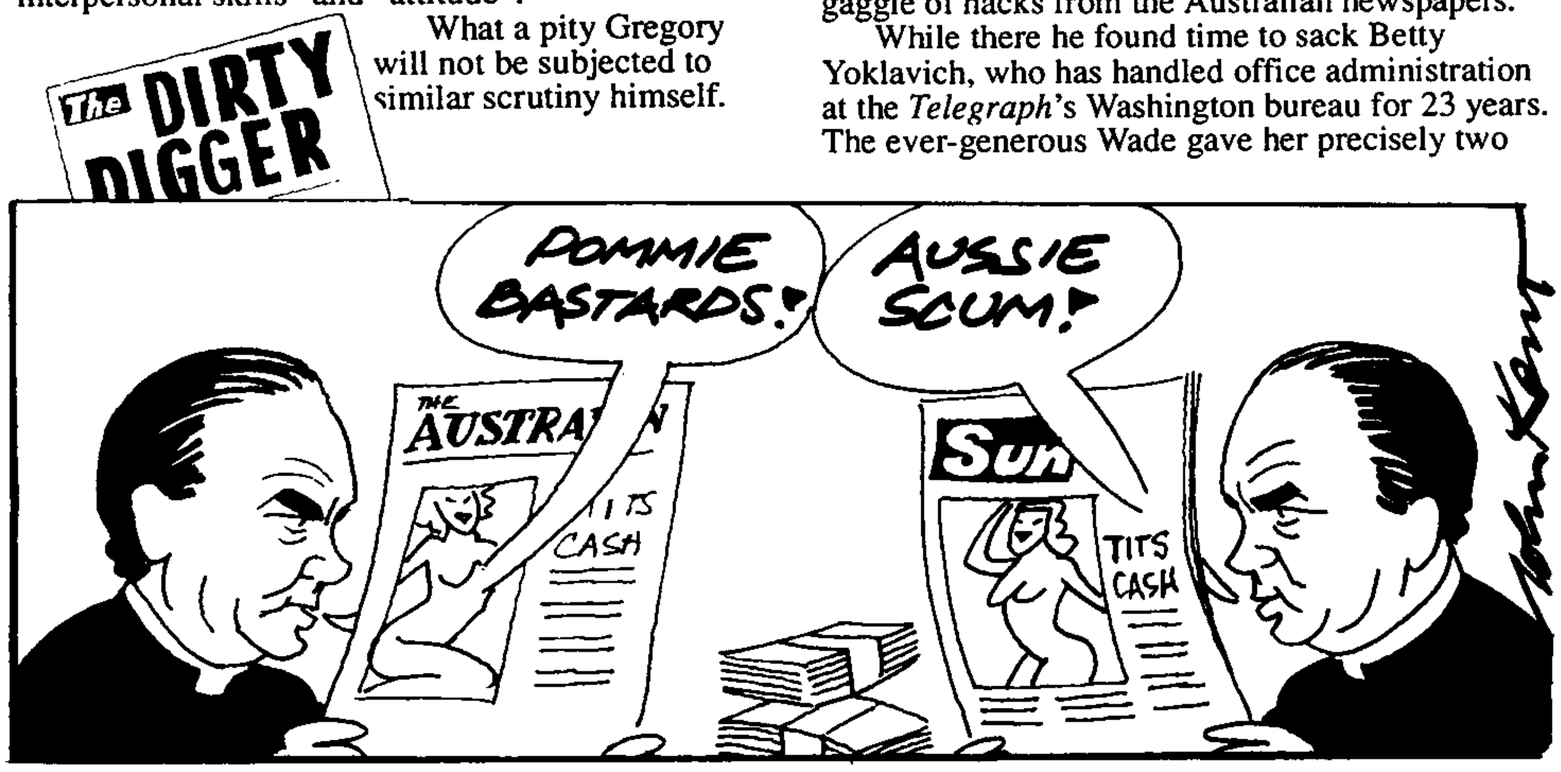
EX-WORLD LEADERS UPDATE

IT'S A funny old world, all right. Mark Thatcher has been rubbing shoulders with no lesser former world statesman than Mikhail Gorbachev... and a curious link has been uncovered between the Thatcher Foundation and the Gorbachev Institute.

Gorby founded rather than funded his institute, which is now housed in the Russian Academy of Science building on the Leningradsky Prospect. Although the building was given to him by Boris Yeltsin, Gorbachev is now being hounded daily by Yeltsin's people who want to throw him and his institute out.

It is becoming so ludicrous that telephone numbers change constantly as Gorby's people are forced to move from room to room. Curiously help has come not from fellow Russians but from Margaret Thatcher and the boy Mark.

The pair recently visited Gorby in Moscow and said great things about his institute. What they did not say, however, was that the Thatcher Foundation is now effectively funding it. Sources in Moscow close to Gorbachev have confirmed to the *Eye* that the major if not sole source of funding has come via the Thatchers.



STEPHEN YORKE, 27-year-old Conservative candidate in the safe Labour seat of Rotherham, certainly has a lot of chutzpah.

Billing himself as a former "political adviser" to the prime minister, he has been putting himself forward as a political consultant to City businessmen, charging out his "expertise" at a ludicrous £750 an hour, according to the City Diary of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Formerly employed in the research department at Central Office, Yorke went to Number Ten as a correspondence secretary (a post previously held by Matthew Parris, Edward Leigh and Chris Butler, all of whom went on to become Tory MPs). Yorke was never employed as a political adviser. Indeed, he was sacked from the job of correspondence secretary by Mrs Judith Chaplin, John Major's genuine political secretary, for incompetence.

Fred Jarvis, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, wrote to Major last July asking for clarification on points arising from a speech Major had given on education. Repeated requests brought no satisfactory answer, and it was only when a cabinet member relayed a message to Major that anything was done about it.

Downing Street wrote to Jarvis explaining that the official had been sacked for sloppiness. That official was the £750-per-hour Stephen Yorke.

JOHN CUNNINGHAM, Labour's campaign coordinator, does not only go off the handle on Radio 4: he's recently had a spat in his Copeland constituency in Cumbria — home of Sellafield — over a proposed nuclear waste dump.

Martin Forwood is the gently spoken campaign coordinator of CORE, Cumbrians Opposed to a Radioactive Environment, a group which has done much in exposing Sellafield's leaky activities. He wrote to Cunningham to ask whether the MP intended to oppose the proposal to dig a nuclear waste dump at Gosforth because he had said that he would support a dump under the sea but not one under the land.

The reply was the sort of scream Cunningham normally reserves for the *Today* programme. "I am surprised you have the effrontery to expect me to enter into correspondence with you. You have consistently, deliberately misrepresented my position on the nuclear industry for some time. I have no confidence in you to tell the truth about me or the positions I take up on issues. Nor do I believe the people of Copeland can place any trust in your judgement or advice. I shall advise them accordingly whenever the opportunity presents itself."

Unfortunately Dr John still didn't say what his view was on the dump. So the *Eye* asked his office for a comment. A faxed statement was promised but, despite a reminder, was not forthcoming.

Most of Copeland's 43,000 voters have strong views about the dump. Around 11,000 of them work at Sellafield — and the rest don't. This makes life difficult for a politician with a majority of only 1,894. If the dump ever does go ahead, however, it won't directly affect Cunningham: he lives 100 miles away.

PITY POOR Rupert Allason, Conservative MP for the Costa Geriatrica (aka Torbay) and his comfy 9,000 majority which leaves him busy, busy, busy.

Allason — a new boy in the 1987 intake — once asked some parliamentary colleagues what surgeries were. On being told, he opined: "That's the lazy man's way to do things."

So how do Rupert's constituents get in touch with him when they have a problem? Apparently they must write to him and he then pays them a personal visit.

Surely this must be very time-consuming? Not so. He admits that his heavy mail bag averages the grand total of one letter a month, which leaves the conscientious MP plenty of time to write spy books under his Nigel West alias.

SOME SITTING MPs on Murkeyside are clearly hoping for divine intervention at the general election.

The magazine *Christian Democrat* has called for a national day of prayer the Saturday before polling, when supporters will pray for "God's choice of candidates to be successful". "God's candidates" is code for any parliamentary hopeful who opposes abortion, and David Alton, the Liberal Democrat member for Mossley Hill, is a prime mover behind the move.

Since Liverpool, erstwhile capital of Ireland, attracts large numbers of Irish women seeking abortions, Alton's Labour opponents have tried to embarrass him over the *cause célèbre* of the 14-year-old Dublin rape victim. Alton, however, is canny enough not to rule out all abortion, and has gone on record as saying that exceptions should be made for victims of rape and incest — a position that does not please hardliners.

ANOTHER keen scouse anti-abortionist is Bob Parry, Labour member for Liverpool Riverside, who fulminated at length in the Catholic *Universe* last month on his "pro-life" credentials, the better to firm up the pulpit vote.

"Yuppies and trendies tried to set up a black candidate against me," Bob bemoaned. "Without a doubt their pro-abortion stance was the reason they wanted my deselection."

This could also be a reference to several fortysomething Murkeyside Labour MPs who wince with embarrassment whenever Parry's name is mentioned. Parry is currently suing the *Express* over claims that he did no work for Peter Kilfoyle during the Walton by-election. The *Eye* got it right when we reported (No 773) that his role was deliberately limited by Walworth Road handlers to giving out leaflets.

NODDY — aka Roger Knapman, the ineffectual Tory MP for Stroud — is is trouble again.

Readers will recall how he made a desperate attempt to curry favour with his constituents by switching support to those protesting about the proposed closure of Standish Hospital.

This time his problems stem from his stance on a proposed cut of £12 million in Gloucestershire's education budget. The story is familiar — parents say schools are already grossly underfunded and that many need essential repairs and new equipment — and local protesters recently lobbied their MPs at Westminster in an attempt to have the county's spending limit increased to stave off the cuts.

The Stroud contingent, many of whom had taken a day off work to travel to London, waited for more than two hours before being met by Mr Knapman. Having made no apology for keeping them waiting, he was then unable to answer even one of their questions. He said he wanted to see all schools opt out of local authority control and then referred to his constituents as "a right scummy lot" before turning his back and, according to one protester, "he was last seen running up a House of Commons corridor".

The "scum" referred to by Mr Knapman included parents, school governors and the head teacher of the biggest school in Noddy's constituency. Although the MP later claimed his remarks referred to a few "disruptive" members of the group, all those who were present denied there was any unruly behaviour.

ANTHONY COOMBS, super-wealthy Conservative MP for Wyre Forest, has attacked Birmingham city council's decision to teach primary school kids how to cope with a life of welfare dependency and avoid loan sharks.

Coombs (Charterhouse and Oxford) was particularly irked by the city education department's instruction that schools warn their charges of the dangers of loan sharks and urge youf to relinquish their piggy banks for credit unions. "One ought to teach children optimism not imbue them with a sense of despair and despondency," exclaimed the member for deepest rural Worcestershire.

By an amazing coincidence the Coombs' family fortune derives from the S&U Group in Birmingham. It specialises in making small loans at high rates of interest to Brummie's under-privileged.

"At least someone's buying something"

THE FUN is about to start in the now-marginal Coventry South-east seat where Labour is desperate to replace Spartist MP Dave Nellist.

Having dumped the candidate best equipped to swat Nellist into oblivion, former journalists' union president Denis MacShane, Labour has bizarrely chosen Sleepy Jim Cunningham, the alarmingly tedious leader of the local city council, as official candidate.

But party members who took part in the selection process allege that Cunningham failed to win the ballot. Astonishingly, they are claiming that the winner was, er, Nellist himself, who still commands such unwavering loyalty from the historic city's socialist hordes that more than 50 selectors crossed off the names of those on the Labour shortlist and plumped for him! The all-powerful T&G, for instance, sent nearly all its ballot papers back marked "none of these candidates is suitable".

Under party rules, if more than half the returned forms are blank or spoilt the selection is invalid. Will Red Dave Nellist, still the people's favourite, now engage the bourgeois courts to ensure that justice prevails? Watch this space.

JOHN WAKEHAM, the energy secretary, is rushing between the electricity generators and the regional electricity companies (RECs) trying to persuade them to use more British coal and thereby save the coal industry from being reduced — as anticipated in a Rothschild report on coal privatisation — from 52 pits to just 12 or 14.

It is not because of any love for Arthur Scargill and his miners: Wakeham has belatedly realised that if the plan to privatise goes ahead, it will wipe out the jobs of tens of thousands of "loyal" miners — those who worked during the strike and in many cases joined the breakaway Union of Democratic Miners. A lot of them live in Tory seats.

Prominent among the electoral victims could be Francis Maude, who as financial secretary to the treasury is a leading campaigner for selling off state industry. He has a 2,829 majority in North Warwickshire and the Daw Mill colliery there employs more than 1,500 men.

Other Tory MPs at risk include Alexander Stewart with 4,495 majority in Newark, Notts; and James Howarth with his 2,689 majority in Cannock. Even health secretary Kenneth Clarke, whose constituency faces the loss of the Cotgrave colliery, would not feel quite so comfortable with his 20,839 majority if feeling builds up in opposition to a wanton destruction of local jobs.

'Backbiter'

Grovel

BAD NEWS for all those who have been excitedly awaiting the "Peter Sellers penis enlargement" libel case, brought by actor Graham Stark against the *Sunday Telegraph*, and previewed in the last *Eye*.

As a precaution, the *Telegraph* had paid £5,000 into court; and just before the trial was due to begin, Stark took the money and ran.

It remains to be seen how much Stark's lawyer, Peter Carter-Fuck, will charge for his services. It also remains to be seen what will now happen to certain interesting letters from a woman in the West Country which the *Sunday Telegraph*'s lawyers acquired while preparing their defence.

LORD GNOME'S congratulations to Jean-Yves Lefur, former boyfriend of Princess Stephanie of Monaco.

In spite of their bust-up, he told *Hello!* two weeks ago, the princess is "very supportive" towards him. "Stephanie and I have the same lawyer," he explained, "and each time that I sue a newspaper or magazine, I do it in cooperation with her, which has more impact on judges. I have had about 50 lawsuits against newspapers and magazines, and have won every single one!"

The lawyer in question is not, as far as we can ascertain, Peter Carter-Fuck.

"Can't say I remember THEM"

WHILE it was gratifying to see the rest of the press following up the *Eye*'s revelations about Mark Thatcher's residency application for Switzerland, I can disclose that it was not the boy's first choice.

Mark had applied for residency in sunny Monaco and had used William Kazan, the UAE roving ambassador who is based in Paris, to push his application.

Sadly Mr Kazan was told by the Monaco authorities that Mark would be best advised to forget the idea as they could not protect him from, among other things, curious hacks. Mark took the advice.

Meanwhile one of his interesting chums, Wafic Said al Aytouni, is using greedy libel solicitor Peter Carter-Fuck to bring an action for defamation against the Arab language magazine *Sourakia*, its editor, a Mr G Sakaria, and a separate action against a Mr Baki.

Injunction proceedings initiated by Fuck and Partners against the defendants prevent us at this stage from providing more details. But by all accounts the trial, which is likely to take place in a couple of months, should prove a cracker.

Pseuds Corner

Like America, Mickey [Mouse] has a lot of black blood... From just the way Mickey swings along in his classic, trade-mark pose, one three-fingered gloved hand held on high, he is jiving. Along with black round ears and yellow shoes, Mickey has soul... Cartoon characters' rubberiness, their jazziness, their cheerful buoyancy and idleness, all chimed with popular images of African Americans...

JOHN UPDIKE
Observer Magazine

[Helen Chadwick has] created Piss Flowers — bronze casts of streams of urine, which she intends to sell for £5,000 each. She will show them in the autumn.

"I would build a good mound of snow with a good density, and then urinate in the middle of it," she explained. "Then I would get a man to encircle my urine hole with a stream of his own. The shapes would be like petals with a series of droplets."

She then poured wet plaster into the melted grooves. "The female urine trail became an erect spear shape and the male's stream a sort of labial skirt," explains Miss Chadwick, who five years ago was shortlisted for the contemporary art world's most prestigious Turner Prize.

Guardian

The Ferrari's sonic signature is an enthrallingly multi-layered affair, a full-spectrum scream of high-pitched cam whine set against a back beat of metallic valvegear thrash, hollow induction growl and thunderous, stereophonic exhaust bellow. The Diablo's sound is simpler and purer. It howls — a deep, guttural, blood-spitting howl.

DAVID VIVIAN
Autocar & Motor

Religiously Imitating His Every Gesture: Plath, Madonna and the Language of Paternity. Denis Flannery, Dept of English, UCD.

Course list
University College, Dublin

At Heathrow, the last place you would expect to find them, the auguries were excellent. While we waited to board the man sitting next to me told me how to boil the perfect breakfast egg.

"Boil it," he said, "as long as it takes to listen to Mozart's 'Tuba Mirum'."

"From the Requiem?" I said.

"That's right. Mozart's Requiem. In D Minor. K626. You can't go wrong. Never fails. Of course," he added, "it must be the New Philharmonia recording. Under Frübeck de Burgos."

EDWARD MACE
Observer

CONTRIBUTORS: John Lewis, M. Woodall, A. Baker, Michael Tierney, Dr P.J. Davidson.

£10 paid for entries

"No — that's the Leonardo virus"

GRINNING style journalist and naff TV presenter Robert Elms may, I gather, face a charge of assault following a bout of fisticuffs in the foyer of the Groucho Club during the season of goodwill.

After a Christmas party held upstairs at the club by Steve Budd, a music business person, there was an unseemly fracas at about 1.30am when the club's lobby was jam-packed with jostling humanity and a tired and emotional Elms exclaimed: "Who are all these cunts? I bet they're not members."

One of Budd's colleagues explained that he was waiting for his coat, whereupon Elms punched him in the face. When Budd, who was standing outside the club, saw his colleague emerge with his face bloodied, he inquired what had happened. He went back in to remonstrate with the man identified as the culprit. When he asked Elms (whom he did not know) if he had hit his colleague, Budd was grabbed by a couple of Elms's cronies while Elms punched him in the face, splitting his lip.

Budd threw a punch that missed, but was separated from Elms and bundled into a taxi by his wife and employees. The next day he flew off for a month's holiday to India, where his cheek swelled up badly.

Budd rang up the Groucho's manager, Liam Carson, who admitted that Elms had called him a couple of days later to apologise for his behaviour, inquiring whether it would be possible to take Budd for a friendly drink. So far, however, the Groucho has taken no action against Elms, while Budd, who now sports an unappealing scar on his lip, has given a statement to the CID at West End Central — as have several witnesses — and is awaiting developments.

● *WHEN WILL the Duchess of York learn that it is a matter of simple courtesy to arrive at a public event properly briefed?*

The recent Palaces of Pictures exhibition at the charming Dulwich Gallery was supposed to be a celebration of the historical development of the public art gallery, and the Duchess Fergiana was invited to open the event.

On arrival she proceeded to make a short speech in which she said how wonderful it was that "we" in the royal family lend pictures to galleries, under the erroneous impression that some of the Queen's pictures had been lent for the exhibition. To grimaces all round she then compounded her ignorance by declaring open this wonderful exhibition devoted to, er, royal palaces.

Such a lack of basic preparation is embarrassing enough — but it could prove fatal if repeated on the ski slopes.

PERUSING the prospectus for The Leys, the Cambridge public school, I am impressed by the list of recent speakers who have addressed the Moulton Society, a sixth-form group that discusses "philosophical, theological and political concerns".

They include Sir Desmond Lee on Wittgenstein; Prof. M. Redhead on the philosophy of science; Baroness Warnock on existentialism; Sir George Trevelyan on holism; Rev. Dr John Polkinghorne on science and religion; Sir Vincent Evans on human rights — and, er, the eminent theologian Jeffrey Archer. Jeffrey's subject? "How to Write the Popular Novel."

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

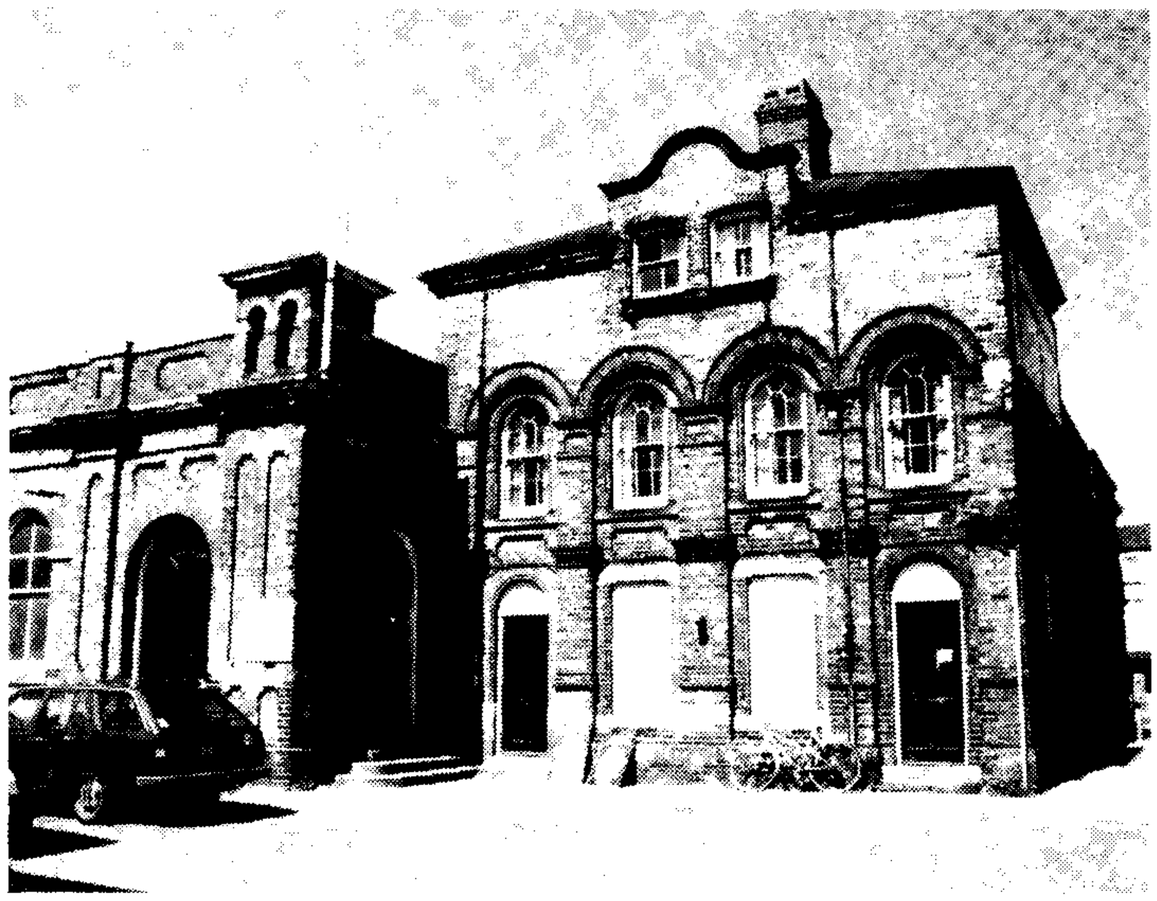
GOOD BUILDINGS can have a hard time in Glasgow, City of Culture. Often they miraculously "go on fire" but sometimes Acts of God are not enough and a little mortal assistance is required when the building is in the way or surplus to requirements.

Readers will recall the lightning strike on St Benedict's Roman Catholic Church in Drumchapel over St Patrick's Day weekend a year ago which completely removed the building — to the surprise and dismay of its large congregation turning up for Mass (*Eye* 764). This was a remarkable design of the 1960s by the firm of Gillespie, Kidd & Coia which had structural problems. As it happened, St Benedict's was just about to be listed, but, naturally, Archbishop Thomas Winning and his advisers had absolutely no knowledge of that when they ordered in the bulldozers.

The famous experimental and beautiful buildings designed by Gillespie, Kidd & Coia were commissioned by Archbishop Campbell, a man foolish enough to believe that his flock deserved serious and numinous architecture. No such arty-farty nonsense is tolerated by his successor, Winning; for him, these structures are just a liability and a confounded nuisance to the archdiocese.

A particularly annoying case is that of St Peter's College, Cardross — a large seminary in a rural setting which, in its astonishing sculptural forms, show a creative debt to Le Corbusier. Unfortunately, almost as soon as the buildings were completed in 1966, they were redundant as the Roman Catholic Church changed its policy on the training of priests.

A similar fate overcame Corb's monastery at La Tourette, but whereas



that masterpiece is still maintained and used, the archdiocese of Glasgow simply abandoned St Peter's. The buildings have now been systematically vandalised and stripped while unspeakable activities take place within their consecrated walls. But why, you may well ask, didn't Archbishop Tom order in the bulldozers years ago so the site could be sold for bungalows? Unfortunately for the archdiocese, the new college buildings were protected as they lie within the curtilage of a listed building: Kilmahew House, a Scottish baronial pile of the 1870s designed by the elder John Burnet.

Now, I am well aware that many readers will not shed any tears for concrete masterpieces of the 1960s, so let us concentrate on Kilmahew House, for that, too, has been vandalised and wrecked. When the college closed, this fine listed building was intact and, for many years, the whole site was kept secure by fences and a caretaker. But last year the caretaker and his fierce dog disappeared, with the inevitable result that the Victorian house has now been professionally stripped of panelling, fireplaces and even plaster ceilings. Owners of listed buildings, of course, are expected to take rather better care of them than this, and I am happy to say the Dumbarton district council is minded to exercise its power to repair and keep watertight what is left of Kilmahew House — and to send the bill to the archdiocese of Glasgow.

All this is very sad, especially as there is an unusual developer in the wings, the Walker Group, which is interested in making use of the site while keeping both the Burnet and the Gillespie, Kidd & Coia buildings. So why did the archdiocese withdraw the security? Of course, if Kilmahew House were wrecked and stripped of its interesting features, then it could be de-listed, and then buildings in its curtilage would no longer be... But no! Such cynical behaviour by the archdiocese is unthinkable.

I COULD believe anything, however, of that utterly cynical and ruthless organisation, British Rail. In Eye 785 I warned that, as a prelude to possible privatisation, BR is trying to dispose of any station building that is anything more than a basic utilitarian shed.

A current victim is Lowestoft Central, a handsome Italianate brick building of the 1850s which still retains its long-span wooden roof — one of only six surviving in England. The bureaucratic mediocrities who cannot run a railway claim that this roof must be demolished as it is "beyond repair" and that it would cost up to £1 million to replace — claims strongly contested by the Lowestoft Civic Society.

Naturally British Rail has declined to permit an independent engineer to inspect the building, nor has it fulfilled an undertaking to release its own surveyor's report. Why should it? History, architecture, beauty, convenience, honesty and responsibility to the public have no place in British Rail's scheme of things — any more than running trains on time.

'Piloti'

TYCOONS

WHO IS paying the legal fees for top barristers representing Ian and Kevin Maxwell?

The question has been asked by almost everyone who saw the brothers refusing to answer questions at the Commons social services committee about the little matter of what happened to about £500 million from the *Mirror* and Maxwell pension funds.

Representing Kevin Maxwell, for instance, is the formidable George Carman QC, whose fees are legendary. Both the Maxwells' finances are now so heavily guarded by administrators, receivers and creditors that it is most unlikely that they have found a way to pay such vast fees from their personal accounts. A benefactor, many believe, must be helping out. But who at this stage would want to be a benefactor for the Maxwell family?

The rich businessman who immediately springs to mind is Gerald Ronson, chairman of the Heron Group. But Ronson denies it vehemently. He is an old friend and is known to feel sorry for the family. Robert Maxwell was also very good to him. When Ronson was charged with rigging the share markets in the great Guinness fraud, Maxwell ordered the *Mirror*'s City staff, much against their will, to write a moving defence of chairman Ernest Saunders's bid to beat off a rival bid.

Maxwell also did his best to play down Ronson's conviction in the Guinness affair. He gave the strictest instructions that the Ronson family were "not to be hounded" by *Mirror* reporters. When convictions were announced, Maxwell even asked if the name of Ronson could somehow be "left out" of the reports in the *Daily Mirror*. The answer was no.

● MORE NEWS of my sprightly friend Ernest Saunders. Now miraculously recovered from his unfortunate illness, Ernest has been proposed for yet another job. This time as a columnist on the City pages of the *Sunday Express*. What an excellent idea from Bollard, Prince and chums, to revive their pages!

Sally Deedes

HARD ON THE heels of the expensive changes to telephone numbers in the capital, British Telecom is planning to add an extra digit to *all* telephone numbers by Easter 1994.

The enormous cost of the change will be almost entirely born by the consumer (the privatised BT, remember, makes such miserly profits.) But despite this neither BT, Mercury nor OFTEL, the watchdog that allegedly protects the public interest, has thought to warn us.

The rearrangement will force businesses and private subscribers to reprint their stationery yet again and — more importantly — adapt their equipment to cope with the added digit. In some cases machinery will be rendered useless; and even some of the telephone hardware on sale today with BT's blessing will no longer work when the code changes happen in two years' time.

When BT lost its monopoly on telephone hardware, other firms designed competing products. But instead of thinking of different modifications, they simply copied existing systems. Consequently all systems examine only the first four digits that a caller uses. A payphone in London can tell the difference between 0737 for Redhill (local) and 0736 for Penzance (which isn't). But the introduction of the extra 1- in front will render both four-figure numbers indistinguishable to the equipment.

Office sytems which automatically route long distance calls via Mercury to save money will require expensive modifications if they are to continue to work after the change. (Is it pure coincidence that this will happen at a time when BT is introducing competitive tariffs for high-users, thereby reducing the gap between its charges and Mercury's? The savings may no longer justify the extra cost of modifying the equipment and BT may recover "traffic" that might otherwise have gone elsewhere!

The cost of the change has been estimated at anything up to £1 billion (office stationers will be in for a bonanza).

But this ignores the fact that proposals for the harmonising of all European systems are now being discussed in Brussels and that any changes — a pan-European number, for example — would inevitably be brought in by the end of the decade.

Sir Bryan Carsberg, director-general of OFTEL, insists that no further changes will be necessary to accommodate this further European addition. But then when London changed from 01- to 071- and 081- numbers, Sir Bryan didn't tell us that British Telecom already had proposals for a national change up its sleeve. Nor is he telling us now how many other cities are scheduled for further changes in the next few years. The existing 071- area is expected to run out of numbers within 12 years.

Worried telephone users need not look to BT for financial compensation. Customers who recently asked the firm to reprogramme their Monarch switchboards to bar extensions from calling the infernal 0898 numbers were quoted £400 per switch for the work — even though the change was only necessary because BT itself had introduced this new code itself.

TV

World Cup Cricket

(BSkyB)

WHEN Major replaced Thatch as Tory leader — and unceremoniously despatched, at an early question time, the standard backbench lob about the commie BBC — it seemed that the new administration might pursue more sensible policies towards broadcasting.

Viewers can stop holding their breath. It is now clear that, echoing his mistress in this if little else, Major has been content to preside over small screen policies characterised by kneejerk peevishness and cowardly indulgence to the cathode ambitions of the proprietor of the *Sun*.

Home secretary Kenneth Baker has already made a pre-emptive lunge for the BBC's testicles by announcing that the BBC will need to be "very careful in the next 8 to 10 weeks" (translation: tilt the election coverage the Tories' way) or risk retaliation in the 1996 re-negotiations of the BBC charter, should Baker's party get lucky on 9 April. And then — adding another stench to that stink — there is the sorry affair of the television rights to the 1992 cricket world cup.

Exclusive rights were bought by crap-from-the-stratosphere merchants BSkyB, as they have been for England's last few winter tours. However, the satellite lads had previously made daily half-hour highlights programmes available to the BBC: quite sufficient for the working cricket fan. This time — because of the Digger's desperate need for his extra-terrestrial empire to start making money — it was decided to limit the earthbound broadcasters' access to one minute daily for use in news shows. In reality, this amounted to two balls, which was fitting as such was the message from BSkyB to those without satellite dishes.

The home office's line was that this outcome was a product of the operation of the free market, so there could be no complaints. In fact, a number of points need to be made.

1. Only by an economist with a mordant sense of humour could BSkyB's behaviour properly be described as trusting to the free market. In fact, the satellite company is operating a cynical monopoly to blackmail cricket-loving viewers into the purchase of dishes.

2. It is worth reiterating (see Square Eyes *passim*) that the pleasures of satellite television were sold — particularly by the Murdoch press — as a cheap, wide-choice alternative to the tyranny of the ever-rising licence fee. Yet someone buying the BSkyB system now — in response to the cricket blackmail demand — would pay more than £400 in the first year, a total of six colour licence fees.

3. Prime Minister Major, who is regularly presented as a cricket nut to boost his ordinary chap profile, was quoted as being distressed by BSkyB's situation. Classless John, it was leaked, felt that the cricket should be available to all. This is really pretty rich, given that the satellite blackmail is a direct result of the Tory broadcasting deregulation, for which Major had joint cabinet responsibility. A similar combination of naivety/hypocrisy attends Major's recent expression of regret that the *Test Match Special* cake-by-cake commentary has disappeared from Radio 3. That blow to cricket was also a result of policies for which Mr Major had joint cabinet responsibility — the redivision of the soundwaves to commercial interests — and which, almost uniquely among Thatch's plans, he has left unaltered.

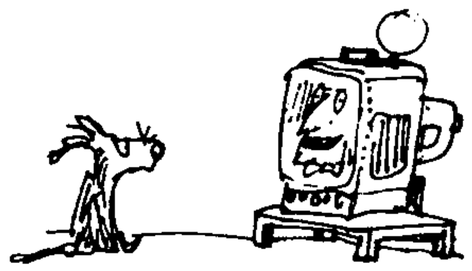
4. Major — if he really is so concerned — could have instructed Kenneth Baker to move to have the cricket world cup added to the statutory list of sporting events which must be available to all viewers. These include the FA cup final and the soccer world cup. The Government's failure to do this was presumably because of a reluctance to irritate the Digger, whose five newspapers will be vital in the election period.

5. It is true that the BBC is not entirely the innocent victim of these events. The corporation was too poor to bid for the world cup because of the cash it poured into the winter olympics: a decision of dubious justification. However, the real villain is Mr Major and the policies he sustains. It seems probable that the PM's recent vertiginous dip in popularity — which was quite unpredicted by his party — can be attributed to his alienation of the leather-and-willow vote. Square Eyes today announces the inauguration of CLAM (Cricket Lovers Against Major). When the election comes, we will hit him with an admonitory bit of bodyline voting.

'Square Eyes'

"Can I have your autocue, Mr Wogan?"

MEDIA NEWS



THE latest example of corporation cowardice over *Panorama* has depressed even those employees hardened to John Birt's craven attitude to the Government.

Some hacks are desperate to believe Sir Peter Jay's programme on the recession was too *bad* to transmit rather than too controversial; but most admit that Birt is just running scared of Kenneth Baker.

Jaybottom meanwhile managed to cover the budget for the Beeb *with* the aid of normally forbidden cigarettes. This was a special favour from above in a desperate attempt to keep his prose penetrable and it required, according to a memo, a fireman in attendance. (Additional cost: £25.)

THE DIRT-DIGGING activities of Dr Julian Lewis, seen most recently on *World in Action* working tirelessly on behalf of the Tory party, has raised eyebrows among cult watchers.

Members of Cultists Anonymous who advise worried parents recall the time before the last election when Lewis approached them full of concern and, on the face of it, keen to help them in their fight against a variety of cults.

At the time members were curious because of the doctor's questions, which they felt were aimed at establishing whether they had any information linking any MPs to the lunatic fringe. Needless to say they heard nothing further from Doctor Dirt and are now wondering whether he was simply trying to unearth juicy morsels about Labour MPs being involved in cults or whether he was trying to find out if there were any skeletons in the Tory closet.

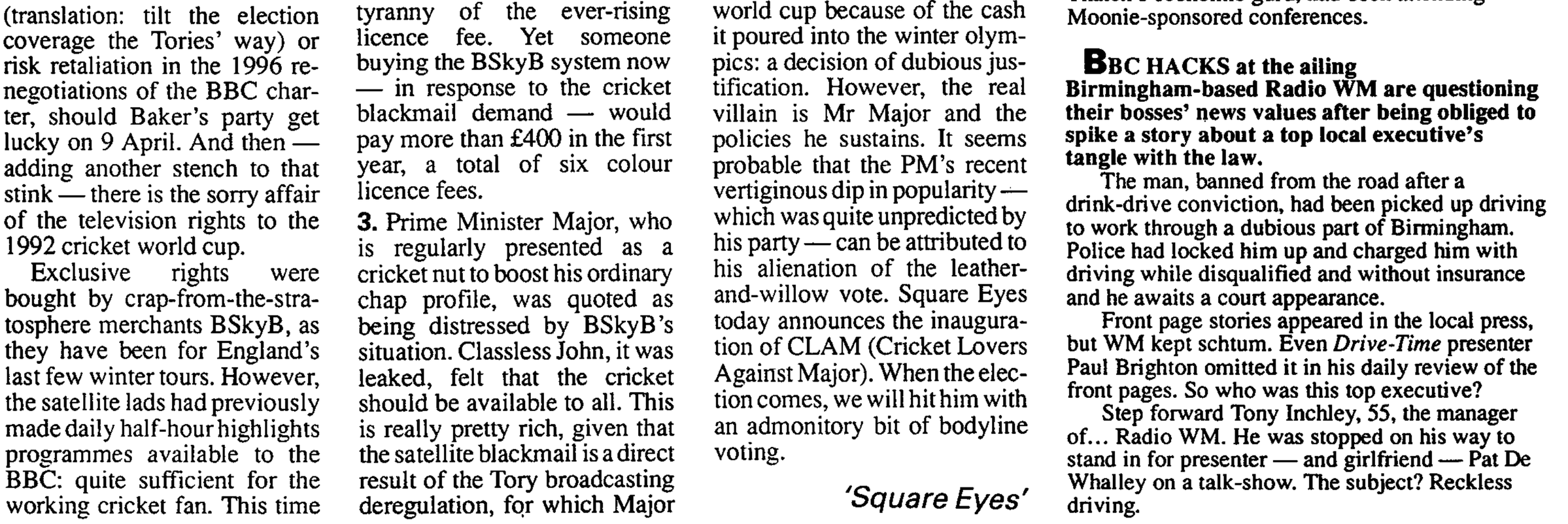
Had he probed further he might have been told of suspicions that a high ranking minister was a supporter of the Scientology movement and its much criticised Narconon drug rehabilitation project. He would have been less than enthusiastic to have been reminded that Professor Alan Waters, Thatch's economic guru, had been attending Moonie-sponsored conferences.

BBC HACKS at the ailing Birmingham-based Radio WM are questioning their bosses' news values after being obliged to spike a story about a top local executive's tangle with the law.

The man, banned from the road after a drink-drive conviction, had been picked up driving to work through a dubious part of Birmingham. Police had locked him up and charged him with driving while disqualified and without insurance and he awaits a court appearance.

Front page stories appeared in the local press, but WM kept schtum. Even *Drive-Time* presenter Paul Brighton omitted it in his daily review of the front pages. So who was this top executive?

Step forward Tony Inchley, 55, the manager of... Radio WM. He was stopped on his way to stand in for presenter — and girlfriend — Pat De Whalley on a talk-show. The subject? Reckless driving.


CORPORATION STREET NW3
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
RANTZEN TOWERS
RW
EAST HEATH ROAD
"ESTHER, IT'S HEART-BREAKING FOR ME JUST SEEING YOU GRIEF-STRICKEN...
THAT'S LIFE to be taxed
DEPRESSED AND ABANDONED...
BAR
"Thank you, Desmond"
I'LL HAVE TO MAKE A PROGRAMME ABOUT YOU!"
"Trebles & VISITS to the Job Centre all round!"
"That's it dear - Lots of lovely tears!"
BBC
BATTERED BIDDIES
Ken Pyne

LUVVIES

"... you have to use your own life to play a part like that — I do ruthless daylight raids on my own life. There is nothing, however private, I will not use. I appal myself sometimes." We stare at one another, both on the point of tears. This woman is emotional dynamite.

JULIET STEVENSON
(interviewed by Libby Purves)
Radio Times

It [Macbeth] moves, says Bogdanov, inexorably, "like an arrow". Even the experienced Pennington is sometimes weary of the claustrophobia of the piece. "It's like a skin disease. The good things of life become especially important. I find myself longing for gingerbread and cappuccino."

Sunday Times

Submitted by V. Ironside, Jane Snow.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

THE SIGHT of Michael Grade dancing around with his new girlfriend, Lindka Cierach, has, despite appearances, important implications for the media.

Now that Grade's discussions on Uganda have finished with Patti Marr, director of *Tonight With Jonathan Ross*, does this mean an end to Dross's show?

With ratings as low as 0.2 million and the peak time transmission failing to make the Channel 4 Top 40, can Dross survive without support from above?

"We've had successful solo careers but we all felt the time was right for us to start working as a group again"

THE Murdoch Beeb-bashers at the *Sun* and *News of the Screws* have gone very quiet on the Stephanie Slater kidnap case.

The BBC *Crimewatch* team have scooped them both and the Wapping hacks are very sore about it. The *Sun* put the kidnapper's voice on a phone line *after* it had been identified on *Crimewatch* and tried to share the glory. Then, having bought up Stephanie Slater for £100,000 (plus TV promotion), they found every other paper had a first-person statement from Stephanie already, making their story almost redundant.

The *Screws* is particularly annoyed after publicly offering a huge reward for information leading to an arrest. On the face of it, the rag will have to pay up — an eventuality not usually envisaged in these promotions — and it could have to pay the ex-wife who phoned *Crimewatch* or, even worse, *Crimewatch* itself.

SIR Bernard Ingham has now caught up with the £175,000 salary he missed out on at the Prudential when Mick-the-Bruiser Newmarch was prevented from appointing him as his PR director.

Ingham's job as a consultant to PR firm Hill and Knowlton, where he is on display to important clients, brings in £80,000; and there is a similar amount from the *Getsmuchworse* for his appalling weekly column. This leaves him plenty of time to make up the shortfall.

In the meantime, Mick-the-Bruiser languishes without his aide and has to make do with Old Etonian Jeremy Wyatt, who is somewhat less than a kindred spirit.

HACK WATCH No 17: Tim Satchell

TIM SATCHELL, long known as London's Most Desperate Diarist, has written gossip columns for such distinguished journals as *Girl About Town*, the *Evening News* and *Hello!* More recently, he was the office boy on the *Evening Standard*'s risible "Mr Pepys" page. But this year he was hired to write a diary called "The Insider" for *Today*.

"Take your time," he was told when he arrived at Wapping. "Wait until you find a red-hot story, and then we'll start your column." On 6 January he was ready — with the news that Lizzie Power, Michael Aspel's wife, was resuming her acting career. Satchell hadn't actually managed to interview her; but *Toady* was so impressed it trailed the scoop on the front page.

Alas! The *Sun* ran the story too — but with quotes from Ms Power. "How did you get hold of her?" a furious Satchell asked a *Sun* hack afterwards. "Er, we rang her up," came the reply.

"It's the diary page for the people in the know," *Toady* boasted on Satchell's first day. "Can you afford not to be an Insider?" The answer is all too easily answered by the following digest:

9 January: Television presenter Clarissa Strachan is appearing in pantomime at Richmond. She "looks splendid".

14 January: The Insider tips "first-rate writer" Glenys Roberts for the editorship of *Vogue* magazine. (To no avail.)

17 January: There is good news for the Duchess of York. "Her great friend Charlotte Duthie, formerly Blacker, has given birth at Queen Charlotte's, Hammersmith, to her first child, a bonny 9lb 8oz boy."

20 January: Another big story: "The other night at theatreland's The Ivy restaurant among those I saw were Anna Ford, Sir Terence Conran, Lauren Bacall, Jonathan Pryce and Steven Berkoff."

21 January: Melvyn Bragg's hair is looking slightly shorter. "It's been the same length since '69. But he has just visited his barber at the Savoy for a trim."

23 January: Sheridan Morley is predicting stardom for two young actresses who are appearing at the King's Head Theatre Club. "They are both absolutely gorgeous," he tells the Insider.

24 January: Lady Helen Windsor is on a skiing holiday with her father. "The relationship between the 56-year-old duke and his daughter has always been close," Satchell discloses. "The duke is understandably proud of Lady Helen and her achievements."

27 January: "The general election on 9 April? Phooey. It can't possibly be that day."

31 January: A new Sondheim show has opened in Oxford. "Quite marvellous," a theatregoer tells the Insider. "Clarke Peters is just brilliant and Diana Rigg is great."

5 February: "Radio 4 *Today* presenter Brian Redhead yesterday broke his glasses in a BBC washroom." However, he has a spare pair.

6 February: Another scoop. "Catherine Zeta Jones is just the kind of bright young person needed to liven up these dreary times... Hooray for Swansea-born Miss Jones."

10 February: John Mortimer, Lady Antonia Fraser and other celebrities will be attending the Labour Party's 500-a-head dinner "at the Park Lane Hotel, Mayfair" on Thursday.

11 February: Larry Adler will also be at the dinner, now said to be "at the Hyde Park Hotel".

12 February: Sensation piles upon sensation: Roy Hattersley, too, will be dining "at the Hyde Park Hotel on Thursday".

13 February: Thursday at last, the day of Labour's £500-a-head dinner — now "at the Park Lane Hotel". Meanwhile, "tune your TV or video recorder to Granada's *This Morning* show between 10.30am and 12.10 tomorrow" to hear Tim Satchell talking about St Valentine's Day.

14 February: The Queen is planning a lunch party to celebrate Prince Andrew's promotion to the rank of lieutenant-commander. The prince is said to be "delighted".

17 February: Actress and writer Carrie Fisher is expecting her first child. Her mother, Debbie Reynolds, is said to be "delighted".

18 February: TV-am weather-girl Ulrika Johnson hopes to join the team of ITV presenters at the European Football Championships in June. "It would be fantastic," a friend tells Satchell.

19 February: Susan Hampshire and Tony Britton are making a new television sitcom. "I'm told that Mr Britton is his usual suave self," Satchell reports, "and Miss Hampshire is delightful."

21 February: "The Queen Mother is in her 92nd year. Isn't she marvellous?"

24 February: "Prince Harry, 7, was riding at Highgrove yesterday on his blanket-clipped Welsh mountain pony."

26 February: The Insider turns his investigative spotlight on Jasmine Ventura, 24-year-old daughter of *Hello!* reporter Viviane Ventura. "I am now doing a secretarial business course," she tells him, "and hope to do translation work as I have four languages."

5 March: Another royal scoop: "The Duchess of York is to be the guest of honour at the British Sports Ball on 20 May at the Grosvenor House in London to raise money for the British Olympic athletes." Music for the evening will be provided by Ray McVay and his orchestra.

6 March: "Foxes," Satchell reveals, "have eaten the much-loved pet ducks belonging to Lord Glenconner's eldest twin daughter, May." She was given the ducks as a 21st birthday present last year by her boyfriend, public relations consultant Paul Davison, 28.

9 March: Lord Glenconner is selling his London home. "It is really too big for him," explains his daughter May, 21.

I-BSkyB

WHEN WE ARRIVED IN OUR DETECTOR VAN THE DEFENDANT WAS WATCHING THE BBC!
HOW DO YOU KNOW HE WAS WATCHING THE BBC?
WE HAD TO KNOCK FOR TWENTY MINUTES BEFORE HE WOKE UP!

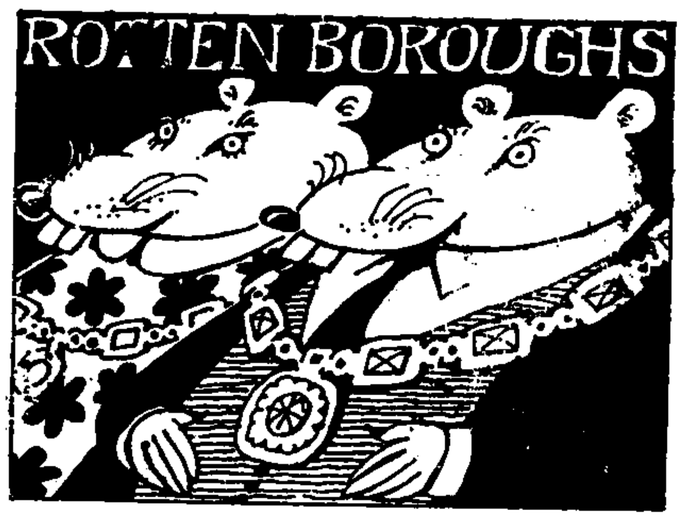
News of the World

Most producers and commentators controlling the political output on your screens and radio are pro-Labour. Presentation of news bulletins is regularly twisted against the Government.

The only channel giving the news straight plus even-handed discussions is Sky. ITV and Channel 4 are as bad as the BBC

WOODROW WYATT News of the World *CONTRIBUTORS: R. Whittaker, Guy Woodward.*

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.



STOCKPORT

LIBERAL Democrat Eric Kime, council leader in the quaint old Cheshire market town of Stockport, hasn't quite got the hang of how serious municipal politicians are supposed to behave.

Last year, when faced with million pound losses following the collapse of BCCI, Kime vowed to visit personally the Sheik of Abu Dhabi to win back Stockport's seven-figure nest-egg. The sheik is still on tenterhooks awaiting Kime's visit.

Kime has now got himself in another pickle having broken the law by voting during a Stockport council debate on Manchester airport. The airport, aka Ringway, is run by a joint board of councillors from Greater Manchester's ten local authorities. Stockport's rep is council leader Kime.

For years, airport executives, including the councillor-directors, have stressed that the opening of a second runway is vital to the airport's economic progress. Unfortunately, by the time Kime had returned from the last airport meeting to the less commercially-frenetic corridors of Stockport town hall he had forgotten about his responsibilities to the airport. When the council debated the airport's effect on Stockport, not only did Kime fail to declare an interest and leave, but he voted against the runway, thereby breaking the feared Section 18 of the Airport Act 1986.

All it now takes is for one Stockport charge-payer to lodge a complaint against Kime and the doddery leader could find himself answering to the Director of Public Prosecutions. In the meantime Kime is unlikely to get first shout for any forthcoming globe-trotting Ringway junkets.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

THE MANIA among council transport planners to reintroduce trams has reached farcical levels in Cambridgeshire where Tory county councillors have come up with a remarkably Stalinist way to force an apathetic public to support the scheme.

They are planning to fit the county's 300,000 cars with "congestion meters" which clock-up a charge every time a car comes to a standstill or joins a queue. Drivers would be obliged to buy pre-paid "smart cards" before a car could be driven — and when the credit runs out the vehicle is neatly immobilised!

Installation costs have been put at £30 million, but the county is so confident the scheme will work it is budgeting for smart-card sales to provide enough money to build a tram network to rival student bicycles in the centre of Cambridge.

Indeed the council has already set up a consortium to install the meters, market the smart-cards, rake-off the card's fees and build the tram system. Presumably it will also have to secure powers of clamping and towing away. Once the fenland inhabitants grasp the full implication of their council's megalomania they are unlikely to hand over their cars willingly.

A three-mile journey with the usual number of stops would cost the motorist about a pound which, the planners reckon, would add up to an extra £60 a week for the average driver — more than enough to force drivers on to Cambridge's as yet nonexistent trams. Naturally critics have pointed out that the system will encourage motorists to speed and take rat-runs rather than face a charge for queuing.

High-ranking transport officers are already queuing to join the new group and presumably pick up a meter-free car. There's only one problem: the technology has yet to be invented. Newcastle University boffins are still beavering away on it, but Cambridgeshire is growing impatient.

BIRMINGHAM

A FRESH scandal has emerged at Birmingham's notorious St John's children's home where yet another senior officer has been suspended and a major investigation launched.

Senior social worker Gilbert Lewis has been suspended over "unusual visits" he has made to a former St John's resident. The boy had left St John's and was living in a hostel where staff became suspicious at the frequency of the visits.

Readers will recall how in an entirely separate incident a member of staff at another home was suspended after he moved a young girl into a social services flat and then made regular overnight visits to supervise her progress.

Mr Lewis will undoubtedly be missed at the short-staffed St John's, but he has a replacement: Julie Orage, who was in charge of the St John's "secure" unit during a mass break-out by children in December. Orage was immediately suspended but has just been sent back to work.

STOKE

CHARITY raisers at Stoke city council seem hell bent on maintaining poverty in the depressed Potteries — they have managed to make an impressive loss on two mayoral charity balls.

Although both balls-ups were meant to raise five-figure sums for the needy, councillors have admitted that they lost more than £1,500. By an astonishing coincidence around 150 of the £12.50 tickets had been given out free of charge to local worthies.

Luckily Stoke's ruling Labour leaders have discovered an excellent way of divesting themselves of responsibility — they have included the losses in next year's poll tax bills. In true Labour party spirit, they will make the people pay.

ARMS NEWS

REPORTS that British Aerospace is trying to sell its construction subsidiary Ballast Nedam raise some interesting implications for the company's work in Saudi Arabia on the mammoth Al Yamama airport construction project.

The Dutch company Ballast Nedam was originally owned by Issher Farres of the Worms Group and was thought by many to be a front for Prince Bandar, son of King Fahd and the Saudi ambassador to Washington.

As stage two of the Al Yamama project came up for tender, BAe bought the Dutch company, which was somewhat strange as Ballast Nedam had no firm orders and was running as a constant loss maker.

In fact, the $90 million payoff went to Prince Turik bin Abdul Azziz, a brother of Prince Sultan, the Saudi defence minister. Turik has fallen out with the Saudi royal family and now lives in Miami. And no sooner had BAe purchased Ballast Nedam than it was awarded the civil engineering supervisory contract for Al Yamama.

If BAe really wants to dispose of Ballast Nedam, it does not portend well for its involvement in the second stage of the Saudi project. It could also mean that current rumours of delays to part two are correct.

Sporting Life

THE Government's decision to postpone further talks on the VAT rating of British bloodstock until after the election has come as a blow to the Thoroughbred Breeders Association and its chairman, Philip Freedman.

The TBA has spent months trying to convince the Treasury that from 1993, when changes in EC law mean VAT will be charged in the country where purchases are made, Britain's rate of 17.5 percent will compare disastrously with Ireland's rate of 5.5 percent. So why isn't the Government more worried? Well, it seems that Gillian Shephard, the treasury minister dealing with the issue, has decided that some of our leading owner-breeders, far from being gentlemen farmers about to go under, are in fact sharp commercial fat cats who have long been exploiting every tax loophole in the business.

Shephard's view has been partly determined as a result of a recent Customs and Excise report on the so-called Dublin Express scam which pertains to the VAT paid — or not paid — on yearlings bought or bred outside the UK and then sent to race in this country. Many of the yearlings are imported on a two-year tax holiday. If at the end of its three-year-old season the horse has increased his or her capital value by high class performances, then the VAT is happily paid on the original import value.

If, as is more likely, the horse has achieved little, the owner looks for a way to avoid paying the VAT on the original and much higher valuation. So Dublin becomes an escape route. For about £2,000 the horse transportation company Peden will fly a horse from Cambridge to Dublin where it is either stabled overnight in what airport workers laughingly refer to as the "Equine Hilton" or simply waits for the plane to refuel and is flown straight back to Cambridge. If it is to stay in the same ownership, the horse is now "re-imported" on a new VAT bond at a revised and lower value; if it is to be sold at public auction at Newmarket it re-enters the country on a special Tattersall's VAT licence. This eliminates the owner (who is soon to become the vendor) from any VAT liability which is now passed on to the purchaser who pays on the ring price achieved.

The last decade has seen countless examples of blue-blooded yearlings that fetched up to $1 million or more at sales in the United States but proved so useless when brought to race in Britain that they ended up being sold to jumping stables for as little as £10,000 and £20,000 a time.

Customs and Excise investigators who reported to Shephard estimate that millions of pounds of VAT duty has been lost due to these transactions and have advised the treasury to beware breeders pleading poverty.

Even the Aga Khan, it is claimed, has made use of the Dublin Express. In 1990, the last year in which he had horses in training in England, he sent a batch of 57 animals to be sold at Newmarket's December sales. Sources at Pedens say all the UK-based fillies in that draft made a short visit to Ireland before returning to Newmarket for auction.

'Major Bonkers'

Hello, Im Nigel-Dinkworth-Smythe-Barton your Conservative canditate
I take it I can count on your vote at the election?
HUSBAND

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

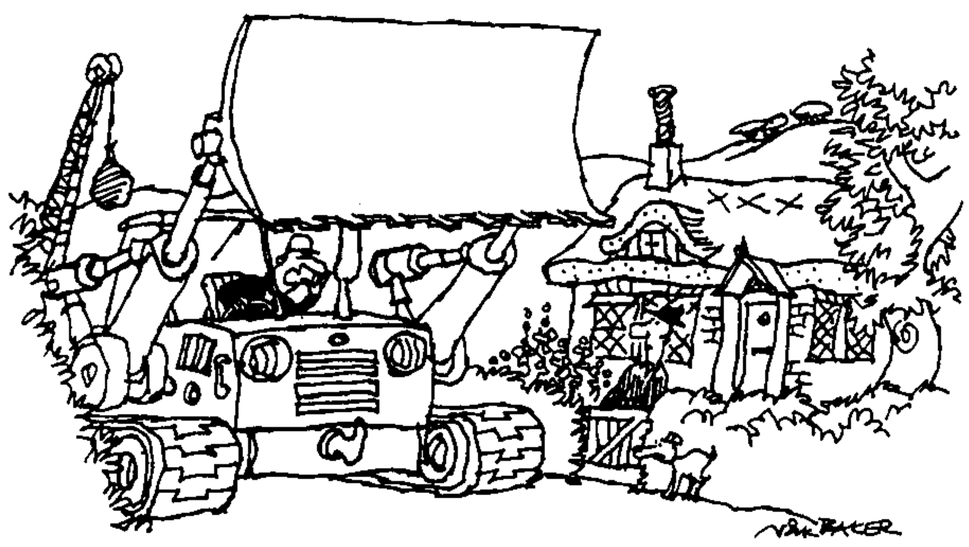
IT IS refreshingly honest that German chemicals corporation BASF calls its magazine for farmers *Maximising Profits* — the farming world is littered with euphemistic titles that usually mean the opposite.

Sustainable Agriculture Food Environment, which boasts the *dull* acronym SAFE, publishes what must rank as the most preposterous farming text of the year. Even though it is only March, we are unlikely this year to read anything dafter than the meandering of Dr Tim Lang of the Public Health Alliance.

Food Fit For The World argues that the efforts of GATT to liberalise the global food market might confuse the world's housewives.

Behind a morass of eco-dribble and participatory mirage for the Third World lies the dull-eyed line that consumers must be preserved from the menace of cheaper and more diverse foodstuffs because they must see themselves as responsible citizens. Which means paying to support as many regulations as possible to support salaries for Dr Lang's mentors.

IT WOULD BE churlish not to praise the work of the Game Conservancy and its Wildflower Project.



"Which way to the Area of Special Scientific Interest, mate?"

While its funds are drawn from the evil agronomist chemical giants who have almost extinguished so many species, some of these dreadful people have now realised that the insects, rodents and flowers of the hedgerow do perform a useful function even when they "are not competitive in nitrogen rich soils".

Familiar weeds such as cornflower, corn cockle, rough poppy, pheasant's eye and shepherd's needle, were bordering on extinction until the Game Conservancy started introducing "headlands" of farmer-free acres. Protected from the meddling of balance sheet-obsessed NFU lads, endangered flowers revived. What surprised the students of the wild flowers was the vast number of predatory insects they attracted. Grass banks, they suggest, are as attractive to insects and spiders as hedgerows — supporting up to 1,500 predators per square metre.

If that sounds like too many creepy crawlies, you have not noticed how industrial farming has destroyed the balance of the land and soil and prairie husbandry creates more problems than the destruction of the ancient fields.

Being useful, pretty and worthwhile, you will appreciate the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food will not pay a subsidy for such banks.

JOHN MAJOR'S various citizen's charters may sound like a jolly wheeze, but sadly they are no more than empty words.

While the prime minister is equipping his cabinet office charter team with the brightest and best of his hunter-killer class assistant secretaries, the first fruits on farming and the countryside are dismal.

Green Rights and Responsibilities would have us believe that councillors and local authorities know what they are doing, that planners have aesthetic sensibilities and that the transport department knows where we want to go and how. But any green charter that says nothing about the common agricultural policy or dog droppings tiptoes round the problem.

DOING THE ROUNDS

THE independent King's Fund Institute report that London's health system is "near collapse" is a tadge at odds with William Waldegrave's rosy prediction.

Many inner London hospitals charge at least 30 percent extra for routine treatments to subsidise their large quota of emergency and super-specialist work. Not surprisingly, they aren't faring too well in the market place and are desperate to save money.

Managers at **The Royal London Hospital Trust** have cut community psychiatric nursing and other essential services by £250,000 to bail out emergency work. And emergencies are themselves being created as the Government's naive policy of waiting lists *über alles* has led to huge queues in casualty.

At **King's Hospital**, some patients have been stuck in the corridor for 36 hours and a few have died-in-waiting. Under-staffing of intensive care beds has long caused avoidable deaths as very sick patients are nursed on general wards and many "intensivists" now view emigration as their only way out. Delayed admissions and inadequate in-patient care of cancer patients at **St Bartholomew's Hospital** has led to the resignation of Mr Jerry Gilmore, senior cancer surgeon. And the low media profile of psychiatric patients has allowed Victorian asylums to be run down *en masse*. **Hackney Hospital** recently won the award of "worst psychiatric hospital in Britain" and consultant Dr Niall Moore has volunteered to bulldoze it down. Unfortunately, lack of community care means the alternative for many psychiatric patients is to be knocked down on a zebra crossing.

● COMMUNITY care continues to suffer from its "insensitivity" to the market (although it won't be long before managers are pricing "empathy"). At **Bexley Hospital** in **Kent**, the intended closure of Elmdene Alcoholic Unit would deprive the area of a vital centre for detoxification, education and support. There simply isn't any money in it.

● "RING-FENCING in Ravenscraig" is also causing psychiatric problems. Despite doing as much auditing as is humanely possible, four psychiatrists there were left with a £140,000 excess in their audit budget and tried instead to fund a much-needed extra consultant. The managerial response? "This money has been ring-fenced for audit only. Period."

● **SOUTHAMPTON and West Suffolk** hospitals have extended the already distasteful practice of charging patients, relatives and staff for parking. New barrier parks charge users 50p to get out, irrespective of whether they've managed to find a space. Perhaps the same principle could be applied to beds.

Of course, not everyone has to pay. In **West Suffolk**, consultants, managers and the "hospi-telly rep" who installs "pay-for-view" movies in patients' rooms have a "permit holders only — wheel clamps in use" car park.

● RAISING cash through health promotion is one of the claims of Income Generation, a branch of the Blackpool-based Matrix Group — "UK leaders in hospital advertising". Patients in 80 outpatient and casualty departments throughout the country, including **Weston-Super-Mare** and **Bristol's Southmead Hospital** are entertained by preachy "get-fit" messages on a migrainous flashing LED display. But what should pop up as the patient rises to meet the doctor? Why, an advert for a local solicitor (such as Hugh, James, Jones and Jenkins of Church St, Merthyr Tydfil). Curiously, casualty treatment results in more litigation than any other specialty.

● "TACTICAL waiting" is putting the dampers on some waiting list initiatives. Patients are asking not to be rushed through on the "get-'em-done-before-the-election; money-no-object" jamboree, but would rather wait until things calm down a bit. This could force Mr Major back to the drawing board, since nowhere in the Patients' Charter does it give anyone the right to *refuse* an operation. At the **Bristol Royal Infirmary**, the operating theatres resemble Piccadilly Circus, as a conveyor belt of patients and relatives are fed through with scant regard for confidentiality or privacy.

M.D.

HUNT NEWS

HUNT SABOTEUR Dave Arnold angered members of the Hursley and Hambledon Hunt by towing a cuddly toy soaked in fox urine behind his mountain bike during a recent meet.

He was later ambushed by a group of terrier men who forced him off his bike, slashed its tyres, destroyed his two-way radio and kidnapped the cuddly toy.

As Arnold and a fellow saboteur, Jo Harris, were returning to their cars, another group of terrier men set upon them and sprayed Arnold with horse urine. The police arrived and proceeded to arrest Arnold, who was later charged with assault occasioning actual bodily harm, criminal damage and a public order offence.

Photographs taken by Harris show that it was Arnold and not one of the terrier men who was assaulted. But for good measure the police decided to arrest Harris too and charge him with obstruction for taking the photographs.

Earlier, another photographer who works for the local newspaper, the *Fareham and Gosport Streetlife*, was also doused with horse urine by a friendly terrier man.

POLICE 5

THE RECENT case of a man charged with armed robbery by Hackney police ended inconclusively last month.

The defendant, Anthony Braithwaite, alleged that officers had tampered with his custody record to conceal the identity of the custody officer and the measures that had been taken to coerce him into confessing.

Photocopies of the record were available, but when defence lawyers asked for the original to run forensic tests on, they were told that it had been lost, along with about 500 others.

Police regard the custody record — a contemporaneous note of every stage of a person's detention introduced by the 1986 Police and Criminal Evidence Act — as a burdensome addition to their workload. Such records have proved a good way for defence lawyers to demonstrate discrepancies in police evidence, however. If, for example, it is claimed at trial that drugs were found on a defendant, that fact would have to have been recorded on the custody record. Obviously, any later alterations made to the record would be detectable using the now notorious ESDA technique.

One wonders when the records were "lost" and how many of them relate to cases involving officers who have been transferred because of allegations that they planted drugs on suspects.

"After a judicial review of the forensic evidence, Mr Sparrow, the verdict against you for the murder of Cock Robin is deemed to be unsafe"

Letters

Haque Power

Dear Ian Pissoff,

Your latest idiotic attacks against myself and colleagues over our opposition to the racist antics of the wafflebag Clarke at Stratford compels me to write this to you and instead of having to spend time and money taking you to court. Had I been the ogre you describe me, I would have taken you to the libel court cleaners years ago. But I allow you imbecile cretins a certain licence because, even I find some of your infantile attempts quite a laugh!!! But the parents who are being disenfranchised by the racist education bureaucracy over Stratford must not be allowed to be violated by your vile invocation of me as the convenient metaphor to justify your latent racist backwardness. So I am asking you to publish this very brief letter.

The point at issue at Stratford and in the ideological surrounds to it is to educate racist gits like you and all your fellow racist gits, swines who find it really shocking that any African or Asian person should dare to think comprehensively about the sick state in which this and other racist, decadent, immoral societies are. The fact and the extent of racist ignorance predominating education and the consequent decline in moral, ethical and spiritual well-being in society ought, in civilised discourse, to be investigated, dissected and opposed and then replaced. What Stratford shows is that there is a long way in this racistly backward society represented by pathetic racist gits like you to go yet before people — black and white — are able to feel free and comfortable in their lives which must be enhanced by the provision of a democratic and healthy education system.

Clarke is in essence acting like a little Englander dictator who fancies himself as a neo-colonialist in charge of a native territory populated by strange "Indians"!

Yours disgusted with ill-educated, immoral, prematurely senile gits and swines at Private Lie.
MUHAMMAD HAQUE,

Chair, London Collective of Black Governors.

Foyled

Sir,

Your recent cartoon concerning Foyles' has caused a degree of puzzlement here. In the entire shop there are only two staff members whose native tongue is not English. These are the tea lady and one of the cleaning ladies. Both have, moreover, been here a long time and would be as ready and willing to comprehend and assist Mr Michael Jackson, should he wish to avail himself of their services, as anyone else working here. As this would have been instantly apparent to anyone paying even the shortest visit to us, we are shocked — grieved — to have to conclude that no-one at PRIVATE EYE *ever buys books.*

Yours truly,
G.K. ARMSTRONG,

Foyles', London.

"The men are unhappy with the UN kit, Sir"

O.B.N.

The enviably beautiful, talented and charismatic Dr [Miriam] Stoppard must be the closest approximation to Superwoman that any mortal female is likely to get.

Joan Stephens
Leicester Mercury

Submitted by Dr A.M. Colman.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Organ grinder

Sir,

To imply that I am not an intimate acquaintance of Fiona "Five Times A Night" Wright is a monstrous slur on my organ.

Yours faithfully,
PETER GRIMSDITCH,

Editor, Daily Yucksome Sport.

Wrong company...

Sir,

I see any of your readers noticed the resemblance between Rolls Royce motor cars, a subsidiary of Vickers plc, and Rolls Royce plc, the aeroengine manufacturer? Probably, but the EYE *hasn't.*

You refer to Rolls Royce motor cars and suggest that it is in financial difficulties. True, perhaps, but your "facts" are not as true. Rolls Royce motors used to be part of Rolls Royce the aeroengine maker, but it was the aeroengine side that went spectacularly bankrupt in the early 70s, was nationalised, then later privatised. Not the motor car division.

Yours faithfully,
GAVIN FRASER,

London NW3.

Sir,

Your filler on Rolls-Royce was presumably intended to catch the jaded imagination of the Ford-driving masses, but it would have had more impact without the inaccurate innuendo it contained. Rolls have been using the GM Hydramatic 400 gearbox in all their cars since 1968, and if this was meant to be a secret they have not been making a very good job of if yet! Other imported components include the GM Harrison air conditioning compressor (USA), Bosch Mototronic fuel injection equipment and "intelligent suspension" units (Germany), Japanese starters, etc. etc. If all this is classified, then no one has told me.

Yours faithfully,
ALLAN LLOYD,

Worcs.

Dogging the hounds

Sir,

In reply to R.P.C. Plowden's letter, I must write in defence of Hunt News. The matter in question is surely less to do with any of the pros and cons of foxhunting, a matter that is worthy of debate but in some other organ, and more with the ethics and antics of its followers and detractors. It is the case that certain groups feel that they can ride roughshod over others and, due to complicity or otherwise, escape the due penalties, that is at hand. These tales of rural beatings followed by a smack on the wrist by Inspector Knacker are becoming remarkably commonplace. It is these actions that Hunt News highlights, and so long as one group continues to harass and persecute with seeming immunity, long may it continue and long the EYE *continue to expose double standards.*

Yours.
GILES BORG,

Farnham, Surrey.

TV Eye

Sir,

Over the years the Eye has been exceptionally generous in the space it has allocated to our long-running dispute with Mr Jan Kavan. You will recall, in particular, the sustained coverage that you gave to Mr Kavan's victory over Thames Television and myself at the Broadcasting Complaints Commission in 1985. Last year, you were quick to chuckle over our request to the BCC to reopen the case.

Since this matter is clearly of some interest to your readers, may I inform them of how it has ended.

On 5 March, the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, for the first time in its history, annulled their previous finding, saying that the complainant, Mr Kavan, had misled them. He had withheld material information: namely, that contrary to his many written statements, a van he sent to Czechoslovakia in 1981 did in fact contain the names and addresses of hundreds of people who were to receive banned literature and other material.

The BCC also rejected Mr Kavan's claim that he had been justified in lying to them by the need to protect people. For the record, Mr Kavan failed to produce any evidence whatsoever to support his earlier untrue claim that our programme had endangered dissidents.

I hope you will forgive me for resorting to this "do-it-yourself" correction. May I suggest an epitaph to your scribblings about Mr Kavan: Gentlemen, you were had.

Your sincerely,
JULIAN MANYON,

Thames Television.

Lookalike

Porter

Trollette

Sir,

Am I alone in noticing the remarkable resemblance between ex-Westminster Council chairperson Dame Shriley Porter and the equally distinguished transvestite "artiste" Miss Maisie Trollette?

Are they by any chance related? I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HOLT.

London SE1.

Head case

Sir,

Your report on me last week was up to the usual standards of accuracy in your festering rag.

I did not utter the words you attribute to me about Ian Gordon. He was not a "villain" and no one "deserves" to be shot.

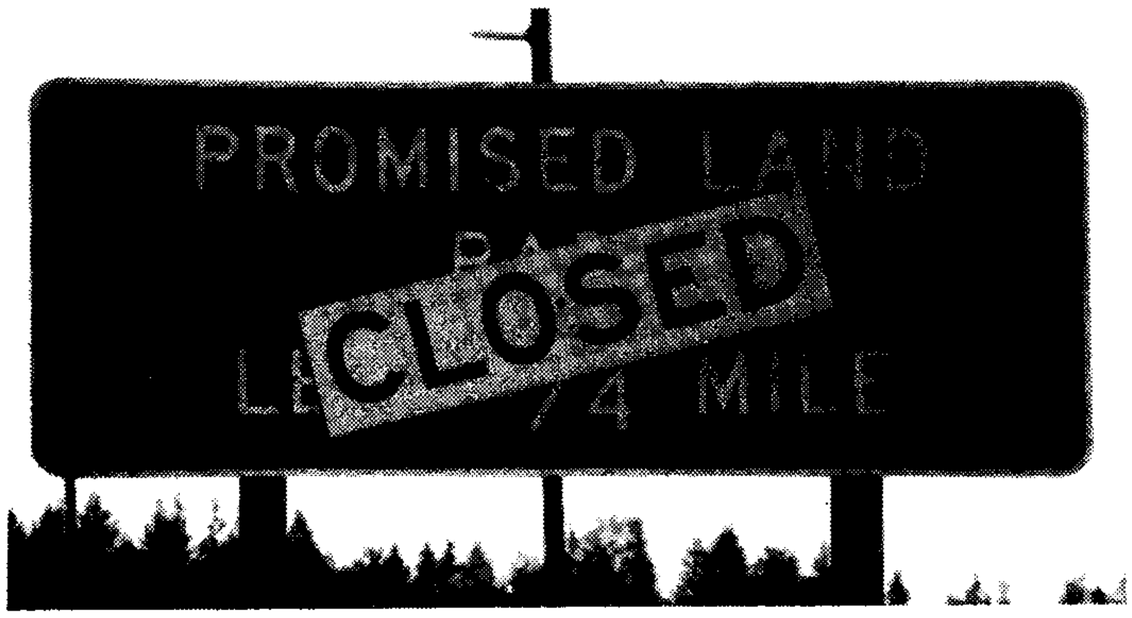
As for the riots, I was hit with a brick and taken to hospital in a police van with a head injury which kept me off work for several weeks.

Perhaps you would print the name of your informant on the SHROPSHIRE STAR, *then I can make up some stories about him, or her, too.*

Yours etc,
PAUL WOOD,

Market Drayton.

● *NEXT WEEK: Those Orimulsion letters in full*



I-SPY

Washington

Submitted by Sue Gagan. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Bee in his Barnet

Sir,

I love seeing my name in print, especially when I don't have to buy the magazine involved. My joy at seeing my name in print is somewhat reduced as your article in the Rotten Boroughs column is only correct in two particulars.

You got my name right, and I am in WHO'S WHO *(and now I am in* PRIVATE EYE*). As to the rest, I must ask who mothered your invention as invention it certainly was.*

I was not chief executive when the council commissioned Price Waterhouse for their survey, nor did I have any part in its commissioning or reporting, although I did write a really good report when I was appointed chief executive which the council liked, approved and implemented. My strategic policy analyst did not get any promotion as a result of that report and my bluebell picker is a tabby cat.

Yours sincerely,
MAX CALLER,

Chief Executive, London Borough of Barnet.

Sunday spurt?

Sir,

The EYE *is perfectly entitled to criticise the* NEWS OF THE WORLD*'s content (Street of Shame, 788). But surely Britain's double award-winning Magazine of the Year should get its statistics right.*

Contrary to the Street item, the NEWS OF THE WORLD *has not lost ½m circulation in the last year or so despite these recessionary times.*

Best regard,
PAUL CONNEW

Deputy Editor, News of the World.

Out of Africa

Sir,

I'm keen (Hunt News, EYE *787), but not that keen.*

When I infiltrated the West London Hunt Saboteurs for the SUNDAY EXPRESS*, I most certainly asked "joe taxi" all about his chosen hobby.*

But I had not the slightest interest in his views on Uganda and had no such discussion with him on that topic.

Yours faithfully,
CATHY SCOTT-CLARK,

Sunday Express.

Out to grass

Sir,

Your very own "pissed old hack" of the Street of Shame column appears to be so far over-the-eight that he has tottered into the mire of hypocrisy.

In the last issue he declaimed the NEWS OF THE SCREWS' *desperate ploy of creating a "scandal line" phone number to gather stories. Yet even the most cursory examination of the* EYE *leads one to conclude that the only way you could possibly uncover all your "revelations" is by pursuing precisely the same tactic of "enticing sneaks, crooks, aggrieved neighbours, vengeful old friends etc, to cash in by snooping or grassing up anyone they have a grudge against".*

Damned good thing too.

Yours faithfully,
S.G.S. CHESSER,

Headingly, The Northern Wastes.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"They are still faster — although their times are the same"
DAVID COLEMAN, BBC2
(Chris Warburton)

"This is a window of opportunity for us to step in to..."
TOM KING MP, Radio 4
(D.H. Green)

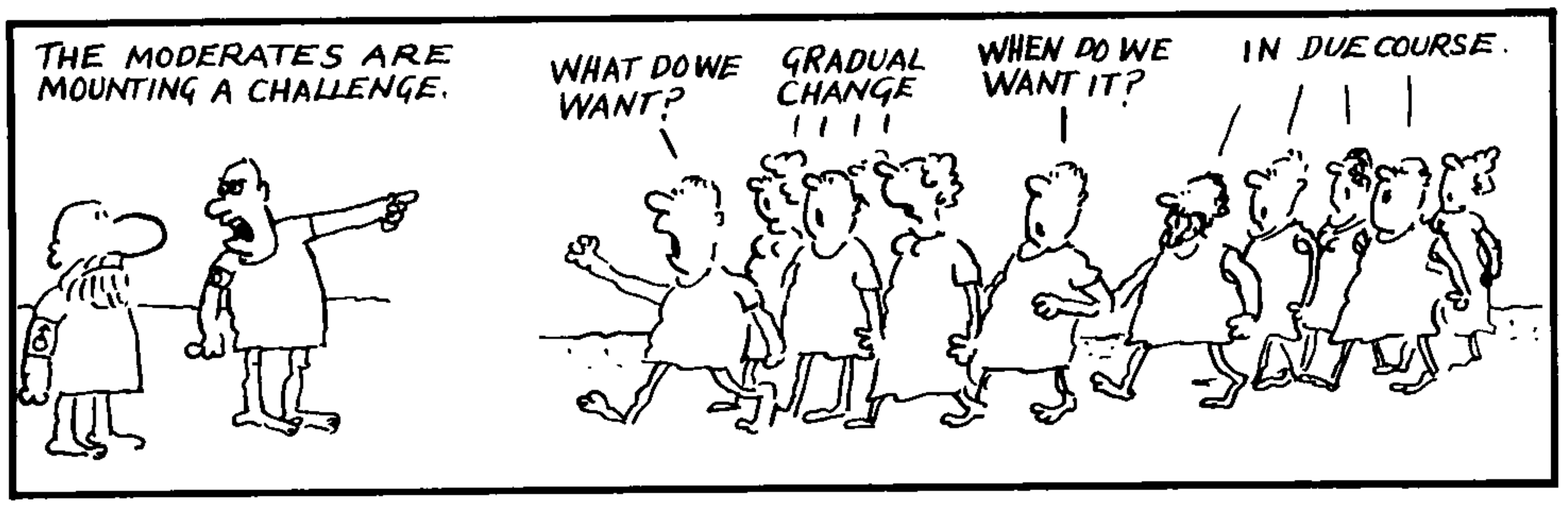
"There's no job in football I've ever wanted. This is the only job in football I've ever wanted."
KEVIN KEEGAN, BBC1
(Dr Nick Beard)

"If you can sort that out, you're a better man than me."
ANGELA RIPPON, LBC
(Andrew Cavanagh)

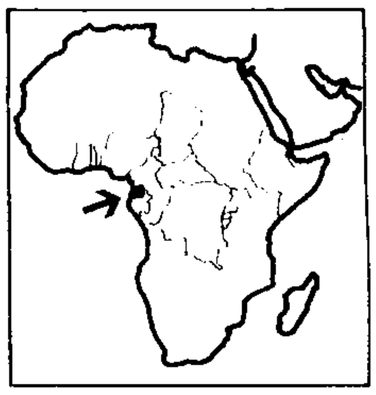
"I've got nothing to prove: I've got to prove to Southampton I can still score goals."
ALAN SHEARER, BBC TV South
(John Sampson)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Letter from **Equatorial Guinea**



from Our Own Correspondent

THE STREETS of Malabo, our tiny capital, are usually quiet in the heavy heat of the afternoon. So the recent sound of opposition heads being crunched by army boots reverberated loudly through our country.

It suggests the proclaimed conversion of president Teodoro Obiang to democracy is little more than a sham — which after 23 years of one-party rule, it is. His form of "democracy" consists of a one-family dictatorship with a ruthless line on repressing political opponents and a pecuniary finger in every pie.

Suddenly last year he announced that democracy was on the agenda and passed legislation to allow formal opposition. Too bad that during the Yes or No vote on his new constitution (a constitution no one saw), armed soldiers stood over the No boxes taking the names of dissenters. Obiang got his vote — from 98.8 percent of the population.

Although aid agencies and donor countries like France and Spain have been wringing their hands over Obiang for years, last year the embarrassed World Bank and IMF finally refused to pay the second part of a major loan unless human rights improved. Obiang began announcing reforms and the IMF released the money. But the process has been shortlived.

Obiang appears unable to bear the idea of opposition in this personal fiefdom. A couple of weeks ago the peace was shattered just off the Calle Nigeria by the arrest of an opposition leader: eight soldiers, lead by Obiang's director of national security, administered a severe beating to Placido Miko Abogo of the new CPDS party. Four of his colleagues were later arrested, beaten and reportedly tortured. Others took refuge in the local diplomatic missions including the American embassy. For their trouble Obiang has restricted all diplomatic movement.

As a small population (around 370,000), so many years in the hands of the Mongomo clan have left us among the poorest and most repressed in Africa. Yet the island of Fernando Po, off the coast of Cameroon, the mainland of Rio Muni, between Cameroon and Gabon, and the tiny island of Annabon were once relatively wealthy Spanish colonies. The hotel in Malabo, the Eureca, tells the story: worn-out sofas, broken air conditioning, threadbare sheets, useless, dust-covered switchboard — and no guests.

After independence in 1968, we were destroyed economically by the rule of President Macias. Like an Amin or Bokassa, a third of the population under his rule were killed, disappeared or fled. But as the Haiti of Africa, our isolation and obscurity meant the dictatorship, genocide, black magic and corruption went unreported in the outside world.

Macias became increasingly unstable. After his wife Monica tried to poison him and ran off to Switzerland to clear out his bank account he issued an edict that no baby girl was to be named Monica. In 1979, alarmed by this behaviour, his chief enforcer, Lt-Col Teodoro Obiang, overthrew his uncle in a coup. Macias was tried and shot; but hopes that Obiang might liberalise the regime were misplaced. While not genocidal, he has been the subject of several Amnesty reports detailing extensive human rights abuses.

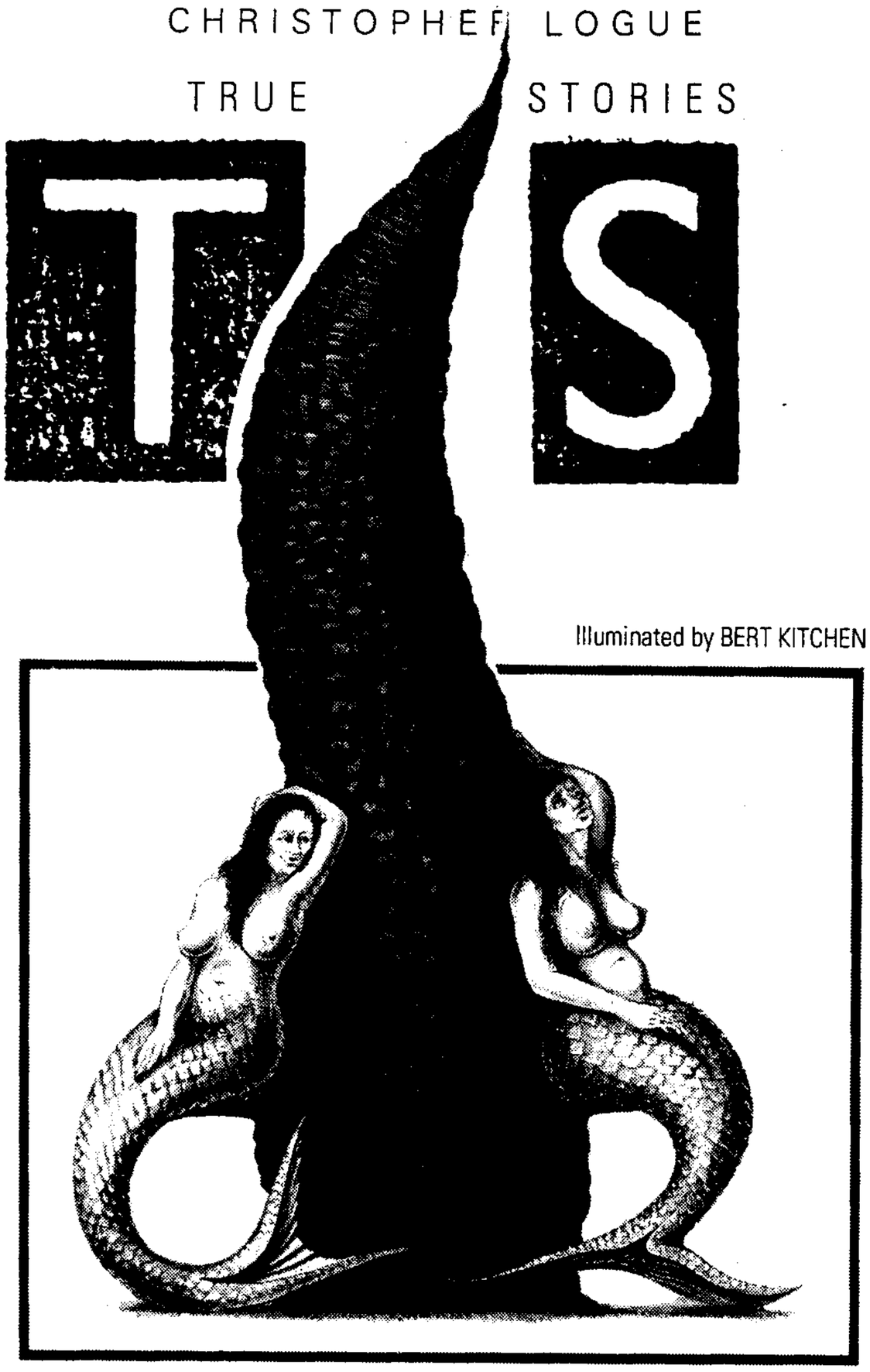
Obiang is kept in power by a presidential guard supplied by King Hassan of Morocco and is rarely seen outside the heavily fortified "People's Palace", except when his black limo is escorted by a formidable force of Moroccan troops. The greatest culture import of this 800-strong unit has been advanced methods of torture.

The greatest shame for sustaining this state of affairs falls on the main aid donors. Our perilous economy is 70 percent dependent on aid, yet Obiang has been able to play the donors off against each other. The biggest donors and offenders are Spain and France. Both have large aid operations in the country, with their four-wheel drive vehicles cutting deep ruts between their comfortable beach side apartments and Malabo's four good restaurants.

Obiang ignores pressure to reform because Spain and France continue to vie for influence. Spain likes the idea of having some Africans who speak Spanish and France has included EG in the Franc zone and wants to build a large business market in the region. Last November Spain's Felipe Gonzalez visited EG and received a personal promise from Obiang that we would be politically liberalised. Gonzalez is now reported to feel "deceived and annoyed" by Obiang's crackdown, but Spain nevertheless still cooperates with the dictator.

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE TRUE STORIES

Illuminated by BERT KITCHEN



DENYING that he was "any sort of peeping tom", Mr T.G. Facing of Wayhoe said that he was standing among the lower branches of the Great Lincoln Oak at about 11.30pm "not to look into the dormitory of the girls' school in whose grounds the tree stands, but to urinate on the fungi growing around its roots as this increases their nutritive power. It is not my fault," he continued, "if the school's caretaker got in the way and so got wet."

Fined £350.

INTERVIEWED after her arrival in Hong Kong, Ms Zing Tu Chow (sic) said: "I spent my savings on a collection of amateur candid-camera shots of young women. Then I answered well over 2,000 lonely-heart advertisements, including one of the photographs with each letter.

"I am not at all pretty, so I didn't use any of myself, but my letter said that I was desperate for love and if the lonely heart liked the photograph he was to send me my fare and travel expenses and I would come to him at once.

"About 1,500 did, and I left Canton for Hong Kong at the end of the week. Now that I am free, I shall start a dating agency."

"ALL the shopkeepers and many of the hoteliers received a leaflet from the Chamber of Commerce asking us all to enter their grand Christmas and New Year Decorating Competition," said Mrs Joan de Ordsall of the Endar Shopkeepers' Association.

"At a conservative estimate, I would say that we spent over £1,000 on lights, tinsel, bunting and cutouts. However, by the time the 12th of January came, no one had been awarded the silver cups for either the first, second or third prizes. When we made enquiries at the Chamber's rooms, a proxy spokesman admitted that the Board had forgotten all about the competition and the three judges had all gone to Miami for the holiday season. As for the cups, she said that they had been used as prizes in a similar event held by a nearby town."

ON HIS statement to the Judicial Investigating Committee, Captain Tore Tortibati of the Mamenda Market Police said:

"We are holding a hardened thief who penetrated the market and took statistics of the choice filled stalls. At the end of the day, this clever and determined felon went from stall to stall gathering a huge bundle.

"When he arrived at the place he had noted earlier in the day, he flung the bundle over the palisade. But that was his mistake. My men had spotted his mark and they pounced on him as he crawled out from under the palisade. Then we gave him a severe beating. But he has refused to plead guilty — as they all do — and our investigations are continuing."

Questioned by the Committee, Mrs Adamawa Garoua, the mother of the accused, said: "My son, Doube, is only eleven years old. He admits he was in the market at night and that he stole two exercise books and a pencil-box to help with his education."

"WE believe in competition," said Mr Ian Cohen of the Balina Green Party. "Last month the Byron Greens produced a Big Loo, a ten-foot-high full-flush replica. So we have produced our Big Turd. It is 14 feet high and four around. We parked it outside the Green office, and Patsy Jenkins and Tamsin Wade, dressed up as mermaids, sang a song in defence of Clean Oceans — as we have a lot of trouble with beach pollution around here.

"We wanted to get the Big Turd through the door and into the office lounge, but it got stuck. Finally the police, many of whom are keen Greenies, arrived and managed to push it in. It was a good awareness event, and everyone enjoyed themselves."

INFORMATION: County Times (West Sussex) 24.1.92; Courier Mail 5.1.92; The Cornishman 9.1.92; Cameroon Tribune 18.12.91; Sydney Morning Herald 8.1.92.

MONITORS: Ian Lavis, Norman Reynolds, J. Hendy, Paul Lashmar, Alyson Scholfield.

BAKER LOTTERY DRAMA

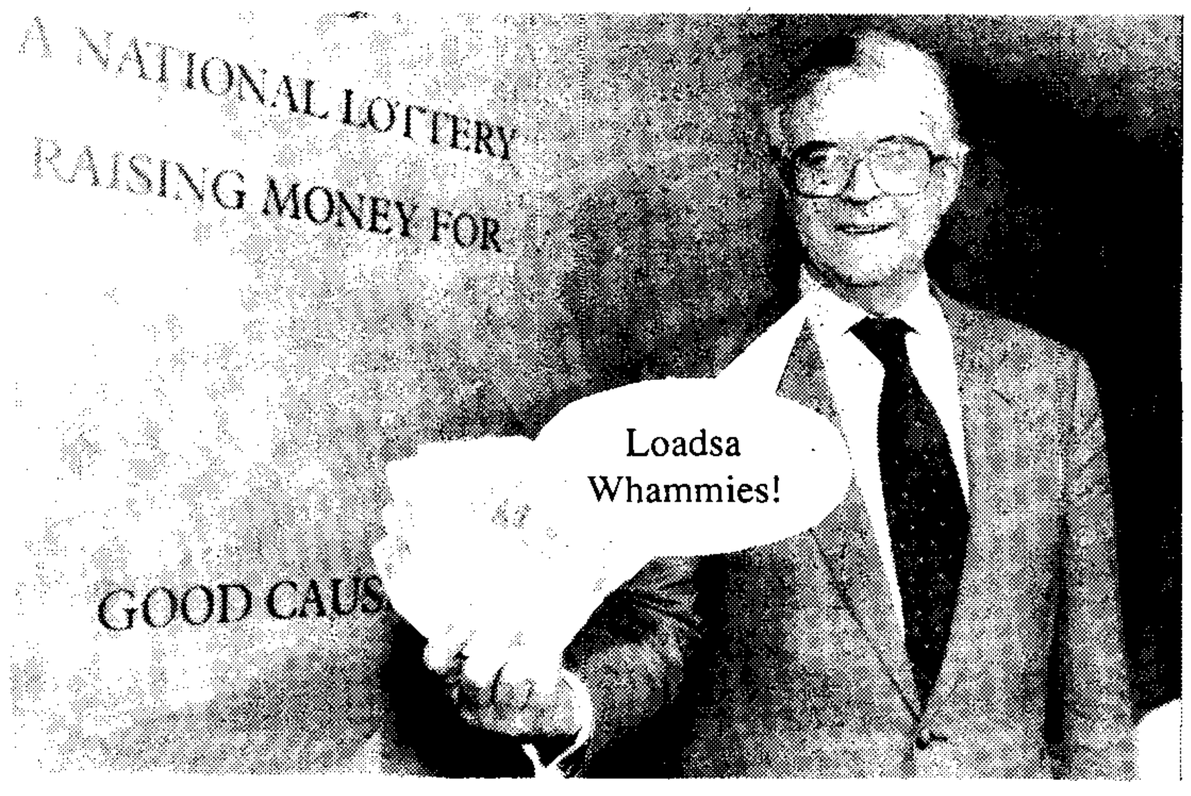
by Our Bingo Staff **A.E. Housey-Houseman**

LAST NIGHT an ebullient Home Secretary announced the launch of a national lottery in order to help raise money for good causes.

Explaining how it would work, Mr Baker said: "All you have to do is put your cross on a piece of paper that everyone will be given on 9 April.

"If you have picked the winner (see local press for name of Tory candidate) you will receive a cash prize in the form of generous tax cuts.

"And don't forget," concluded Mr Baker. "The richer you are, the bigger the prize."



A Doctor writes

As a doctor, I am often asked: "Doctor, will you come and see me, please. I know it's past midnight, but my wife is very ill."

Well, the simple answer is:

"This is a recorded message. The surgery times are between 9.30 and 11.00 on alternate Tuesdays. Thank you for calling."

© *A. Doctor.*

BBC SCRAPS NEWS

by Our Media Staff
Jane Thynne-Stuff

THE Director-General of the BBC, Mr John Birt, has suspended all news bulletins during the run-up to the General Election.

Said a BBC spokesman: "It would be highly inappropriate for the BBC to broadcast highly sensitive items of news relating to unemployment, the recession, trade figures, etc, during this politically important period. Telling the public what is going on could easily be seen as an attempt to influence their views in some way."

Shurely Shamir Mishtake?

"Instead of news," continued the spokesman, "viewers will see re-runs of England's Double Grand Slam victory, the surrender of Argentinian troops at Goose Green, and the Last Night of the Conservative Party *(shurely 'Proms'? Ed)*.

John Birt is 3½.

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam
Menachem Begin and
Radio 4's *Stop The Week*

So. Farewell
Then

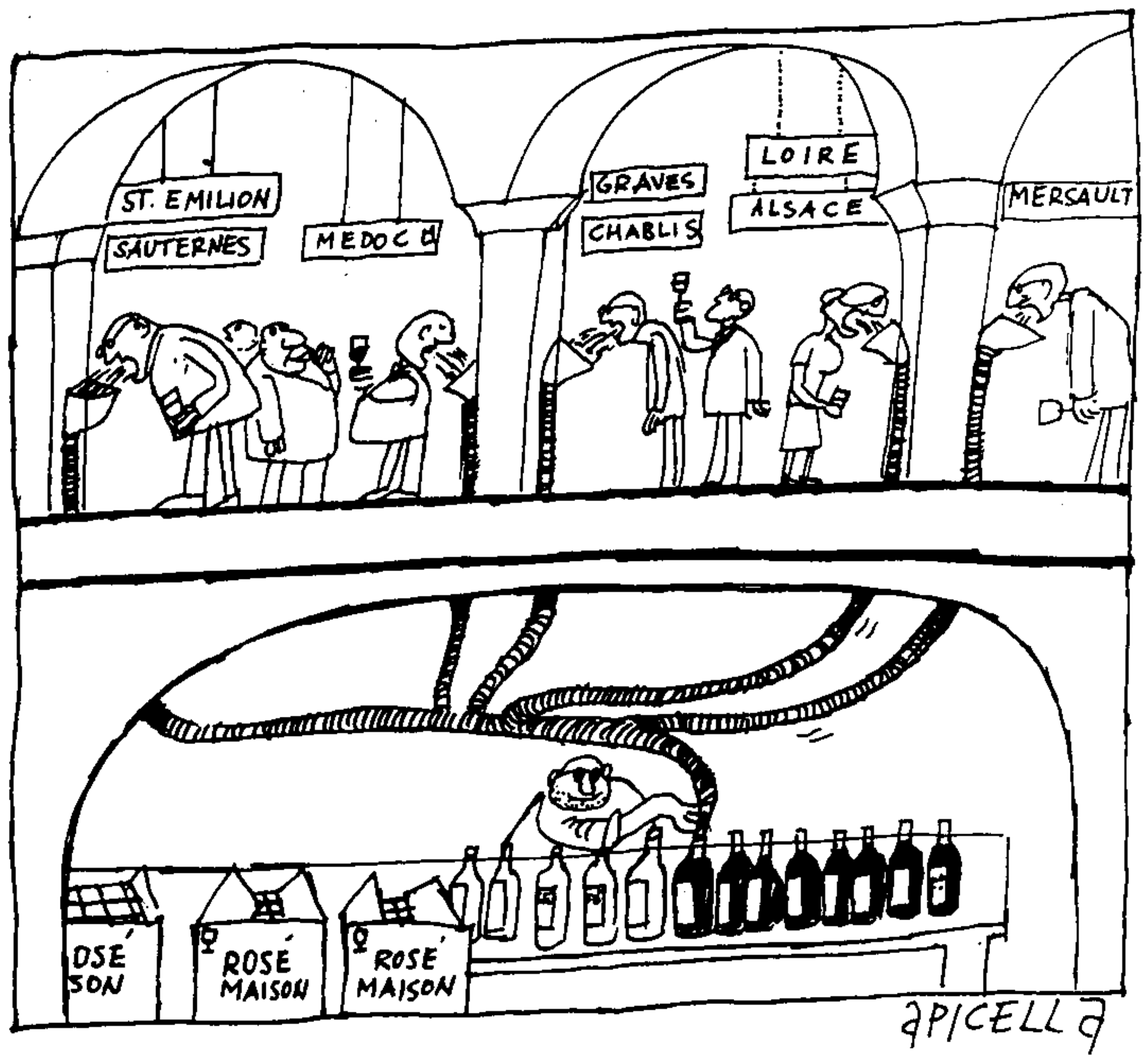
Menachem Begin

And *Stop The*
Week.

Begin. An
Inappropriate
Name under
The circumstances.

Stop.
Highly appropriate
In this case.

E.J. Thribb (17½)



Chris Patten's Guide to those Whammies!

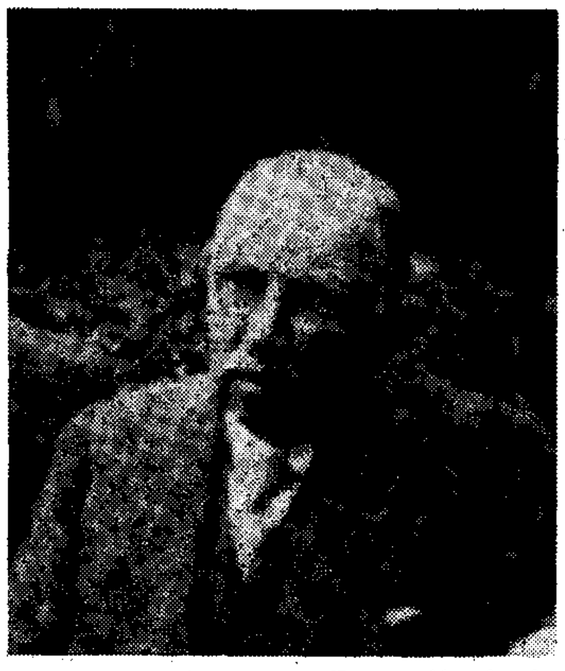
Whammy Davis Jnr	**All-round entertainer**
Double-Grand-Whammy	**England rugby triumph**
Whammy Award	**Prestigious music industry prize**
Whammy-Bammy-Thank-You-Mammy	**Popular song of the 1940s**
Whammy!	**Mr George Michael's popular singing group**
The Whambles of Whambledon Common	**Popular children's TV programme**
Whammy's Hour	**Popular Radio 4 programme presented by Jenni Murray**

(That's enough Whammies. Ed.)

OBITUARIES

(reprinted from the Daily Goodbyegraph)

THE EARL OF MUSKET



The 14th Earl of Musket, always known as Algy, who died on the 13th January at the age of 98 was the last surviving great-great-grand-nephew of the Duke of Clarence. As a result, the Earldom of Musket falls into abeyance, although his Scottish Viscountcy, the Buccleuch of That Leuch, passes to his third cousin, the Hon. Ziggy Smack, who runs a travelling disco-theque.

Algy Musket inherited his title in 1937 from his grandfather, the 13th Earl, who died in a tram crash in Sydney, Australia. His great-grandfather, the 12th Earl, enjoyed a brief notoriety in the 1880s, as one of the central figures in the Tranby Croft "top hat affair", in which a practical joke involving the Prince of Wales and a goldfish went disastrously wrong.

"Double Whammy" Musket, as he was known, honourably refused to give evidence against a member of the Royal Family in the subsequent libel action, and was rewarded by Queen Victoria with the Fifedom of Fife.

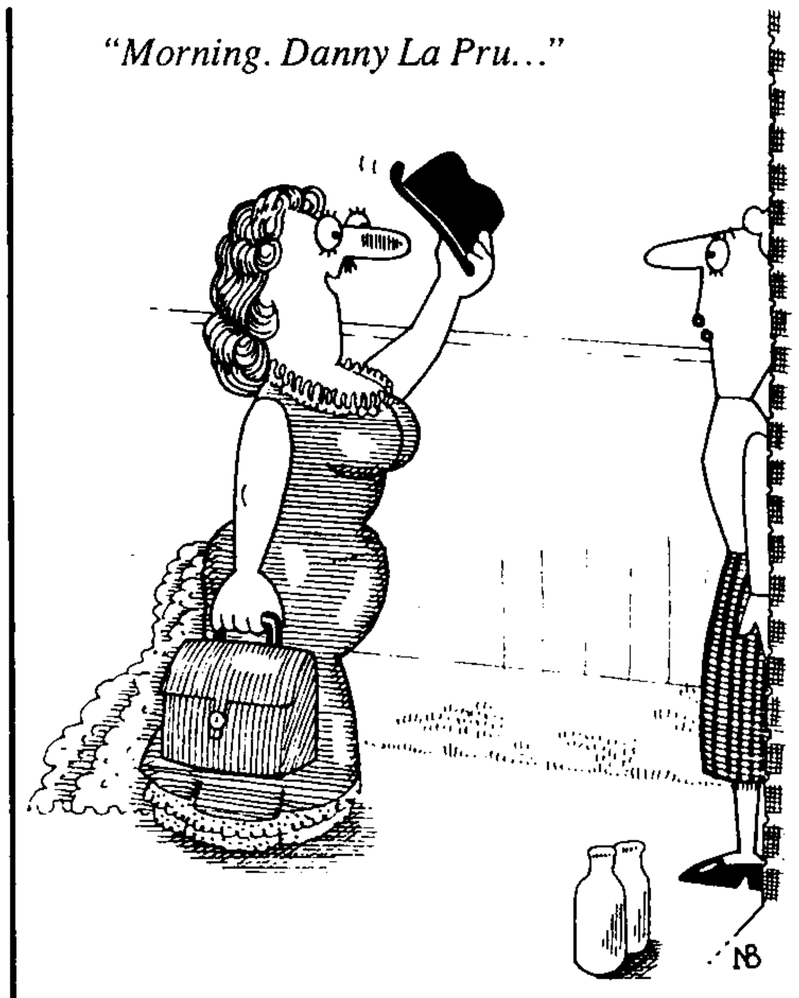
His aunt, the formidable Lady Grimswade, was a legendary leg to boot in otter hunting circles, and her second husband, the 12th Duke of Ballyloony, was briefly ADC to the Governor of Malta during the 1920s, before he was tragically drowned in a boating accident off Pantellaria in 1928.

It was his sister, Lady Camomile Lycett-Green, who was thought to have provided the original model for Mrs Satterthwaite in Aldous Huxley's satirical novel *Eyeless in Gozo* (1929).

Algy Musket lived quietly in Leicestershire and never did anything at all.

(Will this do? Hugh Matey Mockingberd)

"Morning. Danny La Pru..."



MAXWELL SCHOOL OF SWIMMING

Advertisement

THAT INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS 112-POINT PLAN FOR A BETTER BRITAIN IN FULL

Britain's most senior executives and business leaders today announced their most comprehensive political and financial manifesto to date. The 49,000-strong Institute demanded:

1. No income tax for people like us.

2. The privatisation of everything, e.g. roads, police, army, Queen, etc.

3. Er...

4. That's it.

Issued by the Institute of Directors on behalf of no one at all

"I've a feeling that that boy's going to end up in politics"

Out goes

MAN IN THE EYE

In comes

NEW LORD CHIEF JUSTICE 'BREATH OF FRESH AIR'

THE appointment of Lord Justice Horace Dullperson to the nation's senior judicial post, following the resignation of Lord Loon, 192, has sent shock waves rippling through the normally placid, dry-as-dust waters of Britain's legal profession *(writes Joshua Rosencrantz, Our Man With A Beard Asleep In Court 13).*

The two men could not be more different. Lord Loon was educated at one of the country's leading public schools, St Cakes, whereas Lord Dullperson was at St Biscuits. Loon came from a privileged background and read law at Oxford. But Lord Dullperson came from a background that could only be described as privileged, and shocked his parents by his unorthodox decision to read law at Oxford.

Colleagues describe Dullperson as "immensely able", "intensely brilliant", and "staggeringly boring" *(shurely 'outstanding amateur pianist'? Ed).*

His unorthodox views first came to public attention when he was asked to chair the Dullperson Enquiry Into Toilet Seats On British Rail. Dullperson cut through the red tape and within five years he had produced the now legendary Dullperson Report, recommending that all toilet seats should be removed to prevent vandalism, and that in future all-standing toilets should be the norm on Britain's trains.

In an unprecedented move, Dullperson yesterday summoned a press conference to explain how different he was from Lord Loon. "Lord Loon," he said, "was involved in a number of embarrassing miscarriages of justice. I, however, was the prosecution counsel who got Kiszko put away for 16 years."

Lord Dullperson is 83.

Is history dead?

Asks ***Norman Stone,*** *Professor of Modern History at the University of Oxford*

In his fascinating new book, Mr Fushida Fujiyama asks: "Is history dead?" My answer is simple. I hope it is, because then I won't have to do any more work and I can spend all my time in the pub.

© *The Sunday Times*

NEXT WEEK:
AM I DEAD?
by Paul Johnson

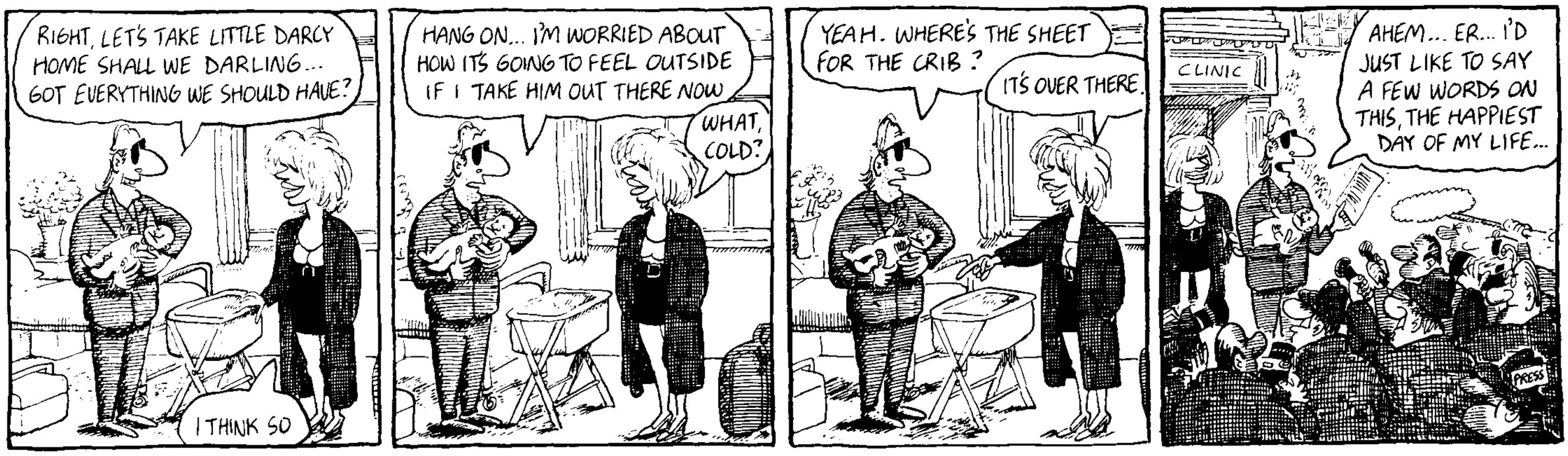
This Romantic England

The Suppliance Of The Filmpersons

Every year since beyond living memory, on or about the second Tuesday in March, a small group of elderly men have come together to enact the age-old ritual of "Saving The British Film Industry". At their head stands the white-haired figure of the Chief Whinger, Sir Richard Attenbore, accompanied by his bearded assistant Mr David Puttnam and a host of followers. At a given signal they all begin to wail in unison: "We have the best technicians, the best actors and the best soundstages in the world. Everyone says so, and yet the government won't give us any money to make such brilliant films as *Truly, Ghastly, Awful* and... er... that's it."

Great Bores Of Today.

"... I just can't believe it when I come back nowadays standards are just rock bottom the service is abysmal no one will bring you anything and everyone is so surly particularly the young people and they are all illiterate watching their disgusting videos and listening to their so-called music that's another thing there are no decent shows in the West End and no tunes you can whistle and the streets are filthy when did you last go down Oxford Street? it used to be full of wonderful shops and little cafes nowadays it's all so ugly like the girls they all wear big army boots and razor blades in their hair do you know how much this scotch cost? a fiver we can get two bottles for that at our local and I wouldn't drive here the police are so rude the whole place is falling to bits people sleeping in the street and dog-filth everywhere no one speaks English not even the English and you can't get a decent sausage anywhere our old fish shop is now a bloody Oxfam and there are no public toilets anywhere to spend a penny I don't know why I come back..."


RIGHT, LET'S TAKE LITTLE DARCY HOME SHALL WE DARLING... GOT EVERYTHING WE SHOULD HAVE?
I THINK SO
HANG ON... I'M WORRIED ABOUT HOW IT'S GOING TO FEEL OUTSIDE IF I TAKE HIM OUT THERE NOW
WHAT, COLD?
YEAH. WHERE'S THE SHEET FOR THE CRIB?
IT'S OVER THERE.
CLINIC
AHEM... ER... I'D JUST LIKE TO SAY A FEW WORDS ON THIS, THE HAPPIEST DAY OF MY LIFE...
PRESS

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

My friend Chris has come up with another brilliant poster for the election. It shows two enormous boxing gloves, with the slogan "Labour's Double Whammy". I must admit that when I first saw it, I was a little puzzled. But Chris explained it was to appeal to "the ordinary geezer in the road", who would know what a whammy was. "Well," I asked, "what is it?" He gave me one of his funny looks, and said he would find out by lunchtime.

Tuesday

Today is one of my favourite days in the year, Pancake Day. Oh yes. Mr O'Donnell came in and said: "We're all going to have our pancakes in the street." I was not sure about the point of this but we went outside and discovered

hundreds of photographers waiting for us. Norma was carrying a big frying pan and I carried the mixture in a bowl.

"Where's the lemon?" I asked, and everyone for some reason looked at me.

Mr O'Donnell's other idea this week was to persuade my wife Norman to give an exclusive interview to the Daily Mail about her dreams. She said she often has a nightmare about a huge grey snake wriggling about in her bed reading Wisden. In the article a psychologist said: "This gives a clear indication that the Tories will win the election."

Wednesday

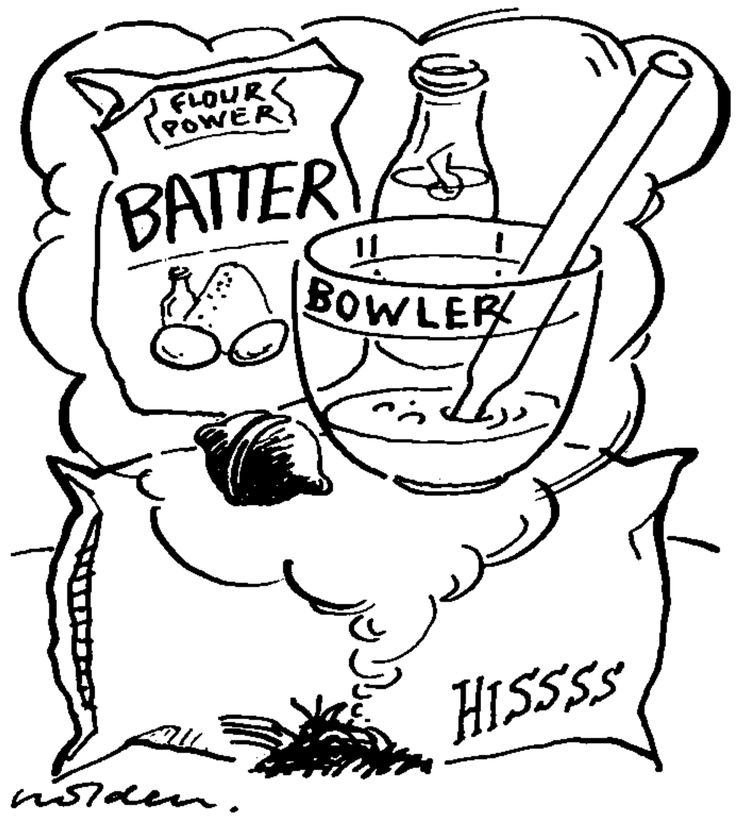
Every Wednesday in my Chelsea Football Club Executive Appointments Diary is marked with a large green star. This means that it is time for a new Charter. Today is Railway Day. As I told the Cabinet last week, there are a very considerable number of commuters in the country and their votes could be in no small measure important for deciding the election. It would be prudent therefore to win their support. "How can we do that?" asked Mr Rifkind, in his funny Dalek-type voice. "Easy," said Norma Lamont. "We give them lots of money. It's what we do for everyone else." They all cheered, except for Mr Waldegrave who as per usual was trying to be clever in his toffee-nosed Old Etonian way. "How is all this going to be paid for?" he asked. "Easy," I said, having a brilliant idea. "We'll put the fares up."

Thursday

My friend Chris rang up in great excitement this morning. "We've won!" he shouted in jubilant tones. I was considerably surprised to hear this as I had not been aware that the election had taken place, but it turned out that he was talking about the cricket in Australia. "Oh yes," I said. "I have been awake all night listening to it on my Walkman. I expect the hissing noise is what makes Norman dream about snakes." Chris gave me one of his funny laughs, the sort he gives when he and Norma Lamont are having one of their jokes together. "By the way," I said, "have you solved the mystery of the Double Whammer yet?" But the line had already gone dead.

Friday

Business as usual. Item One on today's Cabinet meeting agenda, at my insistence, was the meaning of our new policy about Whammies. Mr Hurd suggested that it might possibly have something to do with bridge. Kenneth Clarke thought it was something to do with what drummers did in a jazz band, and annoyed me considerably when he tried to illustrate his point by banging on the table with one of my favourite biros. Norma Lamont said that as far as he was concerned he had not had a Double Whammy since he stopped over in Bangkok on the way back from some conference. Finally Chris read out a briefing document from Hargleby, Bogle and Pratt which explained the term "Double Whammy. American rap slang expression, short for Double Whamburger, a type of grilled



processed meat in a bun, served with cheese, onions etc." Everyone cheered at this. What a genius Chris is! Hamburgers are very popular, and so will we be! Oh yes.

Tuesday

Mr Lamont's Budget has been a great success. His picture is everywhere and it is front-page news. This couldn't be better timing when we are about to have an election! It is also in no small measure fortunate that Norma's Budget is going to make everyone better off. I congratulated him on this coincidence. He laughed and winked at me. "You could say it is a budget for jobs," he said. "Ours."

On the subject of jobs, I have decided to reduce the number of Cabinet posts. By at least one, and I think Mr Waldegrave knows what I am talking about.

Wednesday

Mr O'Donnell tells me that I have chosen a new theme tune for our election campaign.

"The Labour Party has Brahms," he said. "So we are going to have Persil."

"Oh good," I said. "It is one of my favourite adverts, and Norman says it washes grey out completely."

Radio Four

The Today Programme

SUE MACGREGOR: Could I come to you first, Mr Cunningham?

MICHAEL HOWARD *(for it is he):* No, I don't see why the Labour Party should speak first, he's had plenty of time to make his points, not that he has any to make...

JACK CUNNINGHAM: Might I just be allowed to finish what I hadn't started saying, only we're getting a very one-sided view here...

SUE MACGREGOR: Gentlemen, gentlemen, may I...

HOWARD: No, the BBC's had their say. We all know where you stand, the Corporation's bias is a national disgrace and your remarks just now are proof again of what Kenneth Baker said in his speech...

CUNNINGHAM: If I could just say that the next Labour Government...

MACGREGOR: Excuse me...

CUNNINGHAM: And you can shut up as well, with your MBE from Mrs Thatcher, if that's not proof you're in the pay of the Tories I don't know what is, no what we need is a Labour...

HOWARD: No, let me interrupt...

CUNNINGHAM: Oh, no, you don't...

BOTH: You've had your time.

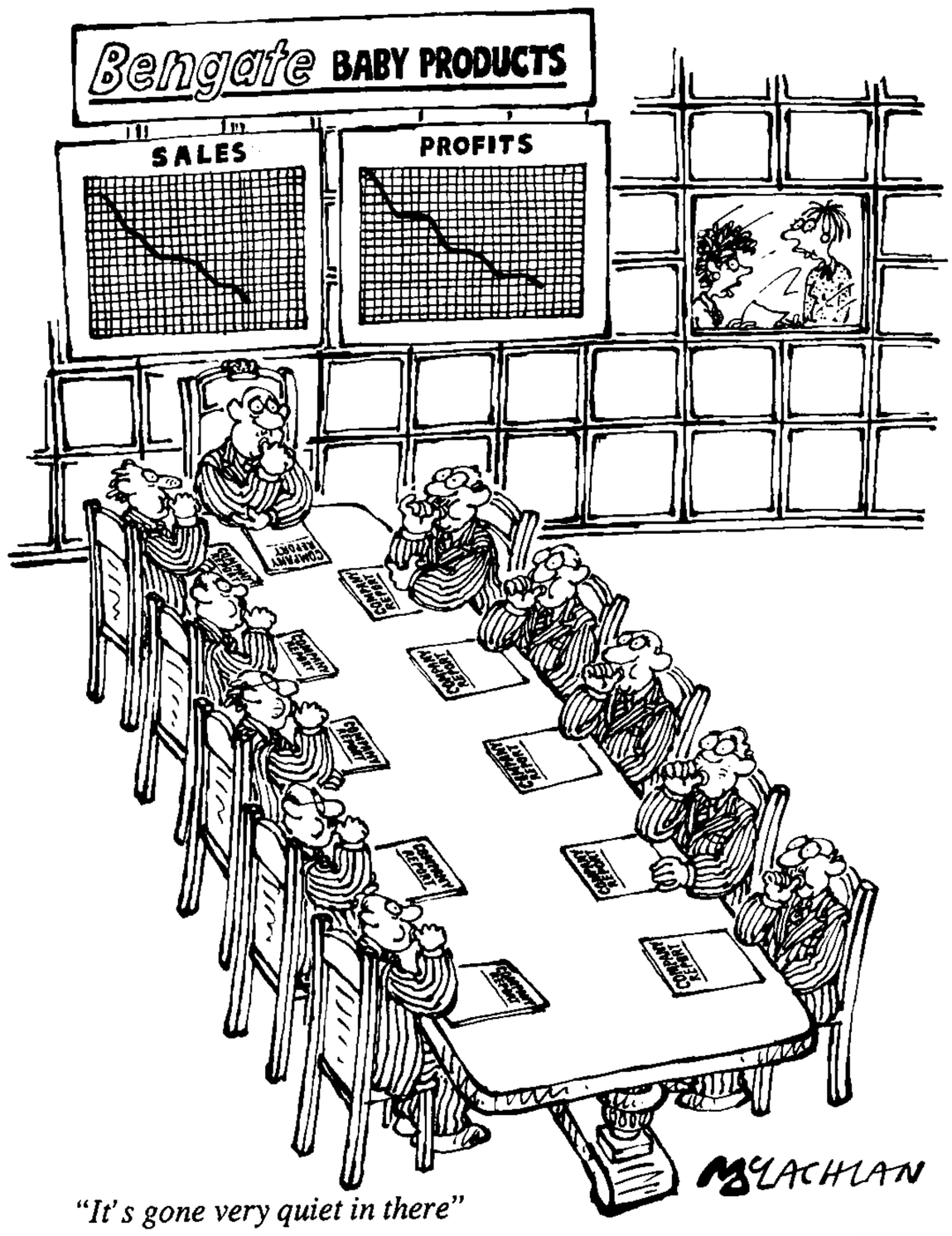
BOTH: No, I haven't.

BOTH: The voters have a right to hear the truth.

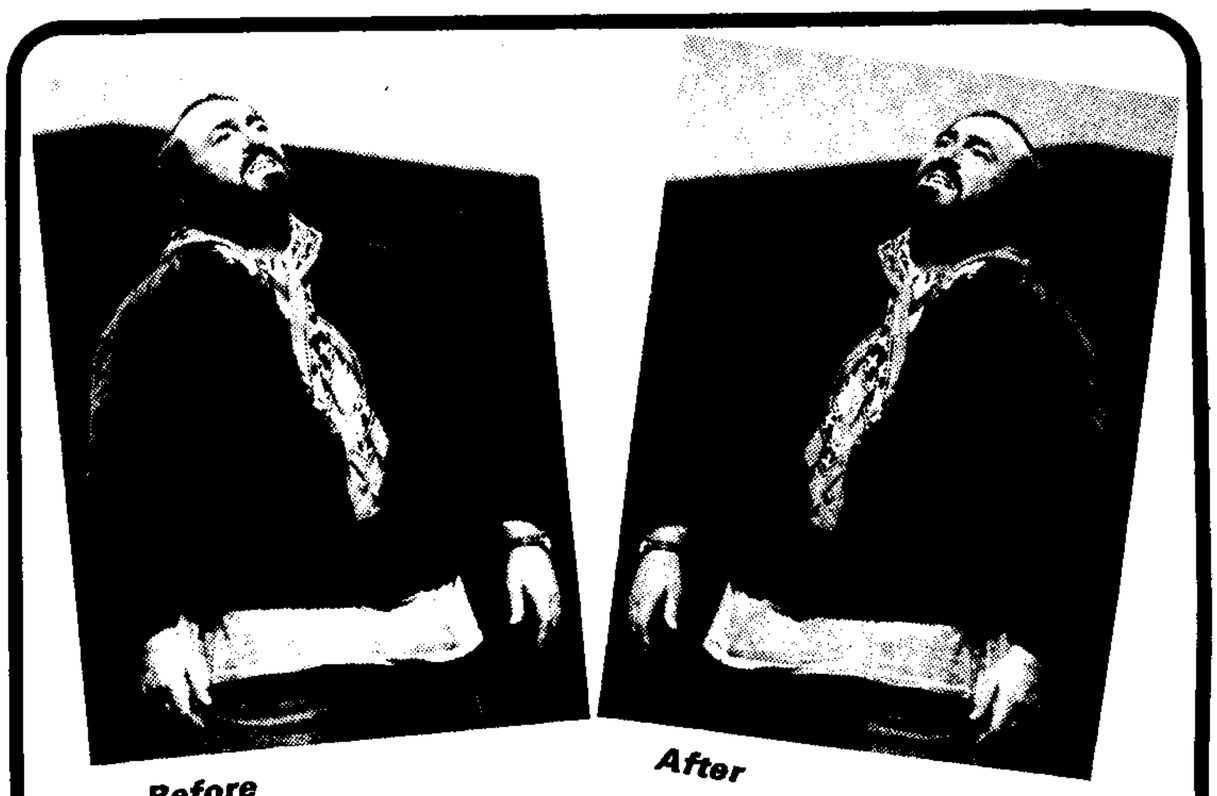
(There follows twenty minutes of incomprehensible shouting)

MACGREGOR: Thank you, gentlemen. And now a look at the programmes later today on Radio Four. On *Start the Bores* at five past nine, Melvyn's guests will be Professor Francis Fukiyawna, columnist Polly Bimbo, and anyone else he can find in the next hour.

(Continued every day)



"It's gone very quiet in there"



Before *After*

How to get your weight down to 21-stone the Pavarotti way

Breakfast

Love of 3000 Orange Juice
The Porridge of Figaro
Madame Buttered Toast

– ❋ –

Lunch

Schubert's Smoked Trout
Coronation Chicken of Poppeia
Magic Fruit with Cosi Fan Tutti-Frutti
Ice Cream

– ❋ –

Dinner

Roll Mop Albert Herring
Caviare Rusticana
Merry Wives of Brown Windsor Soup
Tagliatelli Verdi
Death in Venison
Der Fledermousse

– ❋ –

Plus

300 Tons of Lard to be taken daily between meals

"It works," says TV's opera-loving DAVID MELLOR

Cash offer for BBCI victims

Today

Britain is just weeks off a general election — the favourite tip is for April 9 — and the two main parties are locked in tit-for-tit fighting that is addressing none of the great global issues.

New Straits Times

"I realised that he had been lying, cold, so cold and cruel. I just felt I was going to pieces,"

Major's wife given psychiatric care for killing

Grauniad

KEATING'S CONTEMPORARY ARCHIVE'S

A GUIDE TO AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

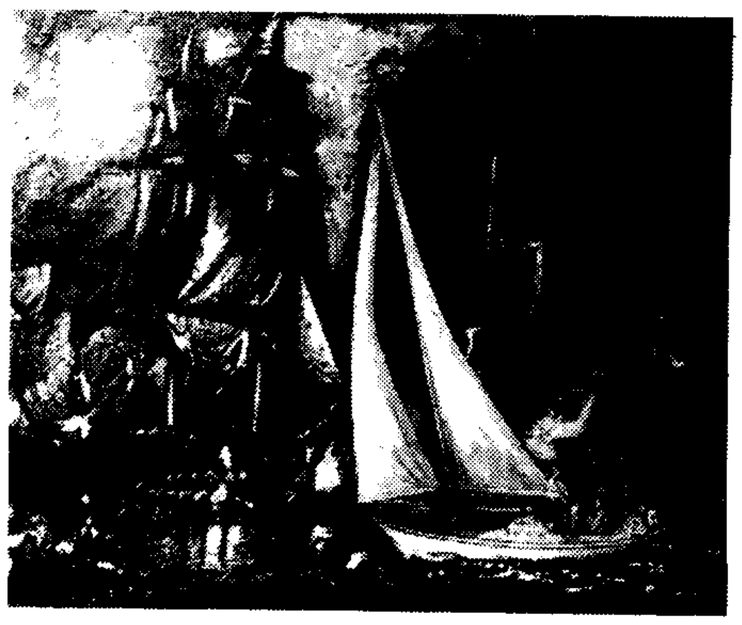
1940
British desert Singapore. Australians win 2nd World War.

1914
British flee from France. Australians defeat Kaiser single-handed.

1854
Cowardly British abandon Crimea. Czar defeated by Australian cavalry in famous Charge of the Swan Light Brigade.

1815
Duke of Wellington scarpers from Waterloo. Napoleon defeated by Prusso-Australian commander, General "Bluey" Blücher.

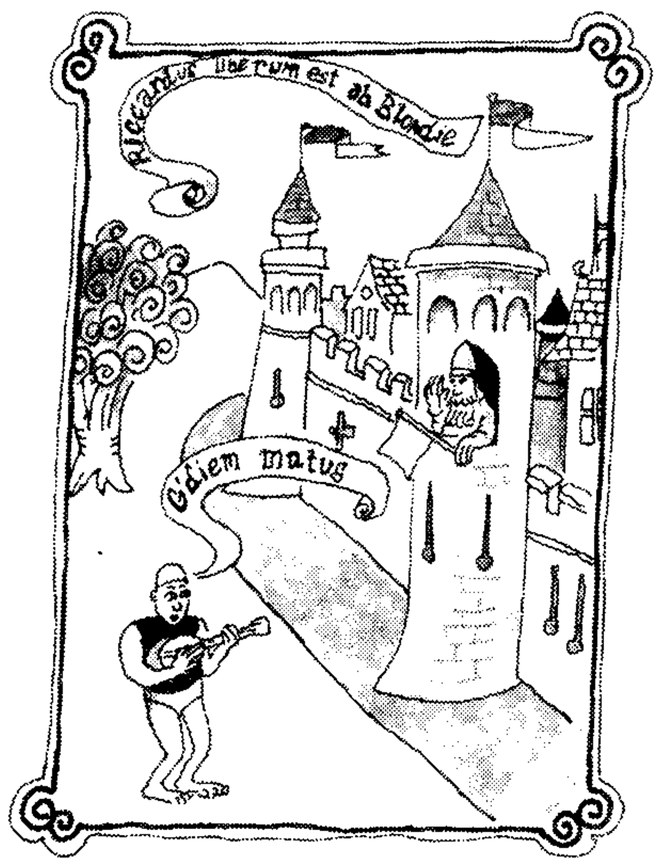
1812
Poofy shirtlifter Admiral Nelson throws in towel at Battle of Trafalgar. French defeated by dashing Captain Alan Bond and his America's Cup-winning yacht.



1649
In the English Civil War both yellow-bellied sides fail to turn up and then surrender to each other, leaving Republican Australian forces under Ollie Cromwell-Road triumphant.

1415
Pathetic lily-livered Henry V capitulates at Agincourt. Day saved by the skill and courage of Australian boomerang men.

1192
Richard the Cowardly Lionheart legs it halfway across Europe to escape the Crusades. He is rescued from Cell Block H by Blondie, Australian minstrel and lifeguard.



216 BC
Battle of Cannae. Anglo-Carthaginian coward Hannibal does a runner back over the Alps on his elephants, giving a glorious victory to Roman general from New South Wales, Scipio the Bush Kangaroo.

1992
Feeble spineless Pom bedwetters under Captain Gooch hide in the locker room rather than face courageous Oz world-beaters. *(That's enough Australian history. Ed.)*

BUSH REELS AFTER MEGA-MONDAY SHOCKER

by Our US Primary Staff
Ida Ho and Mary Land

PRESIDENT George Bush was last night facing the worst crisis of his career, when he romped home with only 80 per cent of the votes in the 17 primaries that make up the so-called "Wonder Wednesday".

A clearly shaken Bush told reporters: "We are on our way back to the White House. Lick my boots."

Meanwhile, a tired but triumphant Jack Buchanan celebrated his 24 per cent victory in Iroquois by appearing on television to sing his hit song *Goodnight Vienna.*

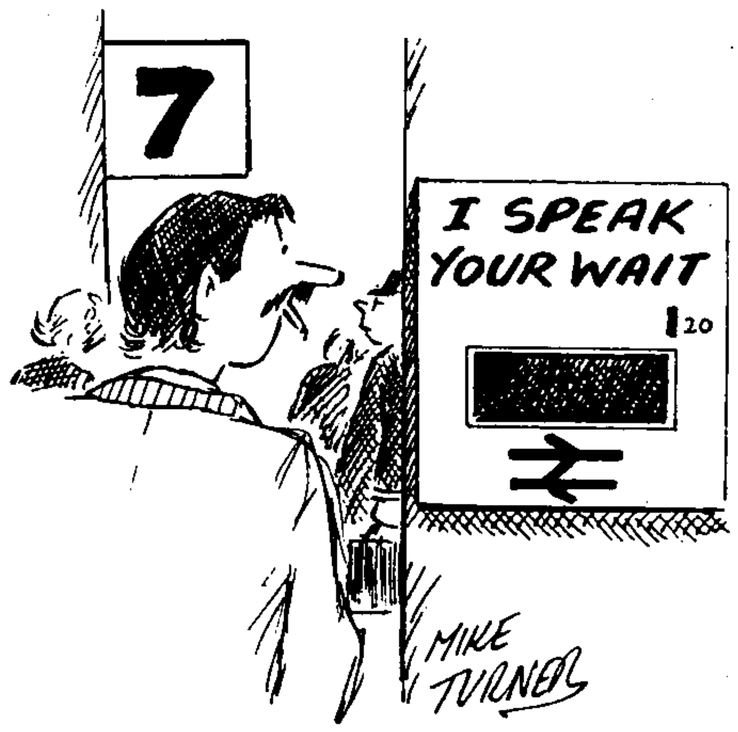
Who Stole My Gary Hart Away?

Among the Democrats there was cheer for Governor Bill Legover, who won a clear 13 per cent victory in Chainsas, Senator Hiram J. Corncircle, who received a "favourite son" 11 per cent in his home state of South Bonanza, and former Congressman Paul J. Tsonglines, who took a comfortable 2 per cent lead in the barometer state of Wyowyoming.

Those Italian Election candidates in full

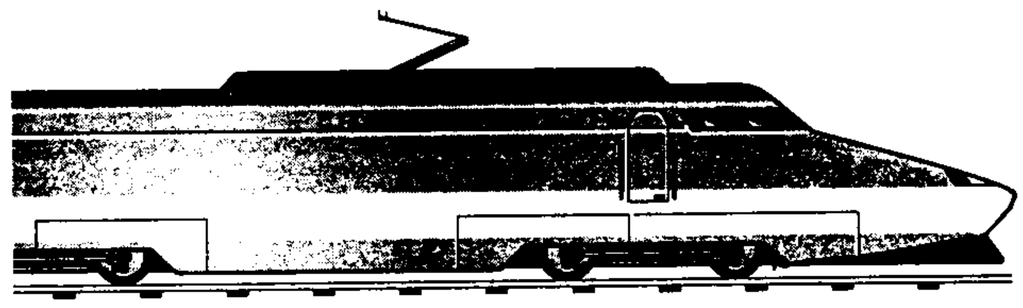
Pornella "La Stripteasa" Legova (Christian Democrat)
Benito Mussolini (Trains Run On Time-Majorist Party)
Benetton Mussolini (Advertisementi Offensivo Party)
Fellatina Bimbetti (Green Sex Party)
Payola Mafioso (Cosa Nostra - SPD Alliance)
Luciano Pavarotti (Liberal Weightwatchers)
Anna-Maria Prostituta (Wages for Stripping Housewives on Cable TV)
Allessandro Chancellore (Agreeable Tuscan House Party)
Gazza Ladra (Not Taking Party)

(That's quite enough Italians — Ed.)



Daily Mail
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1992
30p

MAJOR MAKES TRAINS RUN ON TIME



by Our Fiction Editor
SIR DAVID FESTER

YES, IT'S official! From tomorrow, all Britain's 400 million trains will run on time. Or you'll get your money back.

This latest brainwave is the personal initiative of Britain's most popular Prime Minister since Mrs Thatcher, the man they are calling "Mr Train".

Charternooga Choo-Choo

Here is how John Major's incredibly simple but revolutionary "Railway Charter" works:

● **All trains will run on time, as from the day after the election (but only so long as the Tories win).**

● **If by any chance your train is subject to unforeseen delays for any reason whatsoever (e.g. old copies of *Daily Telegraph* on line, special "cold" snow, special "wet" Swedish-style rain, staff shortages, deficiencies in rolling-stock, people falling out of doors, trains smashing into each other in tunnels, cannabis-crazed drivers forgetting where brake is, global warming, return of Ice Age with Rees-Mogg-style woolly mammoths roaming uncontrollably over Network South-East etc), then customers shall be entitled to a full rebate on the price of their ticket, subject to the following provisos:**

1. That a written application for the refund shall be submitted not later than one full calendar day before the delay takes place.

2. That the application shall be accompanied by a birth certificate of the accused, in triplicate, and two signed witness statements by persons who, while present at the incident in question, nevertheless had no financial locus standi in the outcome of the adjudication under the complaints procedure *(see Railway Charter, 5.78 subsec. 136).*

3. That the customer is in possession of one of the following types of ticket:

(a) single first-class Blue Supersaver (off-peak)

(b) Senior Citizen "Eventide Rover" (Sundays 0900-1330 only)

(c) Young Person's Euro-Rail 3-Monthly Pass (vacation months only)

(d) The Inter-City Saver Businessman's Concessionary Special, between London and Birmingham, Fridays only

We interrupt this article to apologise for the lack of buffet facilities during the course of this item. Thank you for reading this interruption.

(e) The Clement Freud-Alan Coren International Pullman Sandwich Express, Gatwick to Charing Cross (summer only) including the following flavours:

Tuna and Strawberry
Crab and Peanut Butter
Banana and Anchovy
Ice Cream and Onion
Taramasalata and Marmalade
(All subject to availability)

4. A refund shall only be payable where not more than 80 per cent of the designated journey has been completed within 24 hours of the scheduled time of departure according to the British Rail timetable, available from the Customer Travel Information Centre, Euston, open weekdays 10-11 (but not Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays or Fridays).

5. Should your application be adjudicated to be valid, it will be passed on within three calendar months to the Central Charter Refund Processing Unit, Peter Parker House (Floor 22), Hayes and Harlington, Middlesex LO14 9SR. Telephone queries concerning refunds cannot be accepted owing to staff shortages, but customers can write to the CCRPU at the above address. Please mark your envelope WPB — FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CLEANING STAFF and it will be attended to within five working years.

6. Just imagine — this could be you! You could win up to an incredible £200, tax-free, in Major's BR Bonanza! One minute there you are shivering on the platform, waiting for the 7.43 from Southend to Liverpool Street. Ten years later your widow could receive a cheque for £200 *(subject to availability).*

And all thanks to the most brilliant prime minister this country has known in the past 15 months.

VOTE CONSERVATIVE — and you could be one of John Major's BR WINNERS!!!

This article terminates here. Thank you for choosing the *Daily Mail* as your reading material. We hope you will join the *Daily Mail* staff again soon for more drivel by Sir David Fester.

ON OTHER PAGES

Major Greatest Leader since Mussolini, by Paul Johnson 6

What Makes Norma the Sexiest Woman in Britain, by Glenda Lee-Potter 7

Unfunny Anti-Labour Cartoon by Mac 16

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: Prince Charles is due to address the European Cheese Federation at the Chateau Depardieu in Nevers-sur-Dimanche.

Now read on...

CHARLES looked out of the window with pleasure as his chauffeur Whittam-Smith guided the sleek 8-litre Gazzaguzzla Coupé effortlessly along the poplar-lined N94. On either side the glorious fields and meadows of the Haut Cuisine stretched out for miles with small farms dotted hither and thither. Gentle slopes lined with olive trees nestled alongside the well-trimmed vines already showing the light green buds that would later become the prized dark red Lisa St Aubin de Terrain claret *(Get on with it Ed)*.

France was magnifique, Charles thought, so rich in natural husbandry and so unspoilt compared to the high tech agro-business-centred thingie that had taken over his beloved Norfolk. Here were the world's genuine farmers, smallholders keeping hens and goats as they had done for centuries, father and son through the ages... how had his friend and mentor Sir Laurens van der Post put it in his book *The Luxury Gîtes of the Coup de Ville*?...

"What is sauce for the goose tastes very good on the gander"... How true that was... how très vrai as they put it...

The car slowed to a crawl as an elderly woman in a black shawl attempted to usher a herd of long-haired michelin sheep across the road.

"Get out of the bloody way! Excuse my French!" exclaimed the rubicund chauffeur. "Bloody peasants! They're still living in the Middle Ages round here. Go on, get out of it you old bat!"

Charles winced and did his best to ignore the ebullient Whittam-Strobes. His attention was drawn by a crudely written sign on the roadside, which said BIENVENUE. LOCAL FARM PRODUCE. PICK YOU OWN CHEESE. ENGLISH SPOKEN. VISA/ACCESS ETC. FIRST RIGHT.

Charles was intrigued. Yes, you see, there it was — untrammelled local enterprise free from the sort of bureaucracy that Brussels was trying to impose. This was clearly a sort of sign as to what he should say in his speech. With growing excitement he directed Strobes to turn off and drive up the lane.

And there the farm was with the grey stone-walls and the red-tiled rooves that were so typical of the architecture of the Haut Cuisine. Immediately the timbered half-door opened and a woman wearing a sleeveless Lyn Barber jacket and a matching Herpes scarf called out at him in perfect English:

"Look here! The Fromagerie is over there up the track. Roger and I are absolutely sick and tired of you people driving up here and disturbing us. We've only got four weeks you know and you're ruining it."

Charles muttered a feeble apology and ordered Whittam-Strobes to turn round. Perhaps they should carry on with their journey after all.

"MESSIEURS, Mesdames," Charles began as he surveyed the enormous banqueting room in the Chateau Depardieu and the expectant upturned faces of Europe's leading cheese manufacturers.

"I am considered something of a big cheese in my own country." He paused waiting expectantly for the laugh which his speech writer Dr Barkworth had promised him would greet this brilliant opening sally.

After a moment of silence he continued.

"I have just eaten some of the most magnificent cheese ever created. It has been my very great privilege to sample tonight no less than 37 of your delicious cheeses, from the firm Embonpoint with its grape-ash crust to the ripe, runny Aznavour with its goaty tang. Then there was the blue-veined Roquenrole, the smoky Gavroche from the hills of Peregrine, the rich Pol Epeque of the Nadir and so many more. I salute each and every one of your great fromages."

Charles felt his hand shaking and wondered whether the room wasn't rather hot.

"We hear too much nowadays of so-called health and hygiene in food manufacturing. What would happen if the busybody inspectors of the Common Market were to poke their interfering noses into your fabulous cheeses? It would be little short of a tragedy."

Charles noticed he was sweating profusely. Perhaps someone could open a window? He felt a sudden shaft of pain in his stomach. Sitting in the car for too long no doubt, he thought. Valiantly he struggled on with the speech.

"The Euro cheese-police would no doubt ban for ever the glories of your magnificent enterprise. They would call Brie a health hazard. I call it gloriously unhygienic."

At the mention of the word Brie, Charles was immediately overcome by a wave of nausea. Was the room going round? He couldn't breathe, he would have to get out. Clutching his stomach, he ran from the hall as the polite applause for his speech subsided.

(To be continued)

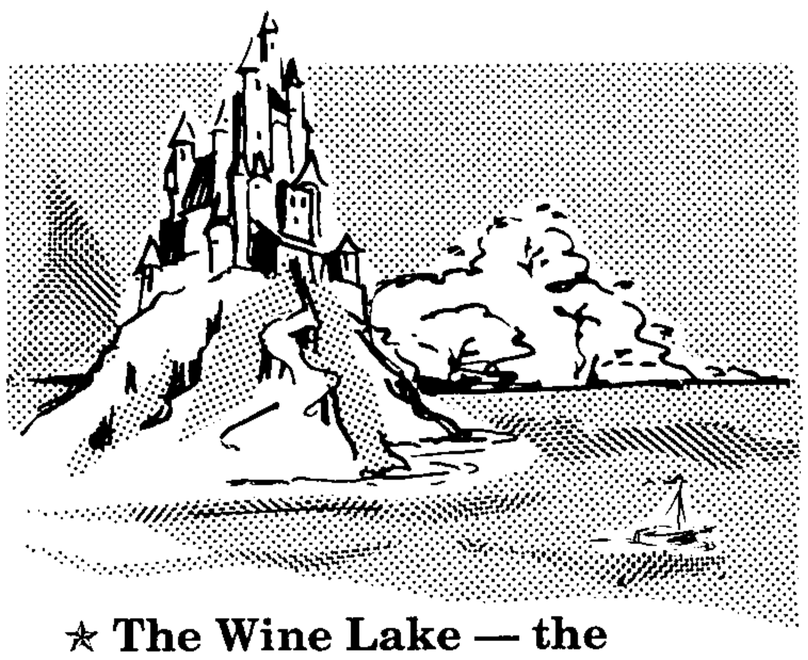
PRIVATE EYE GETAWAY OFFER

EuroDismal

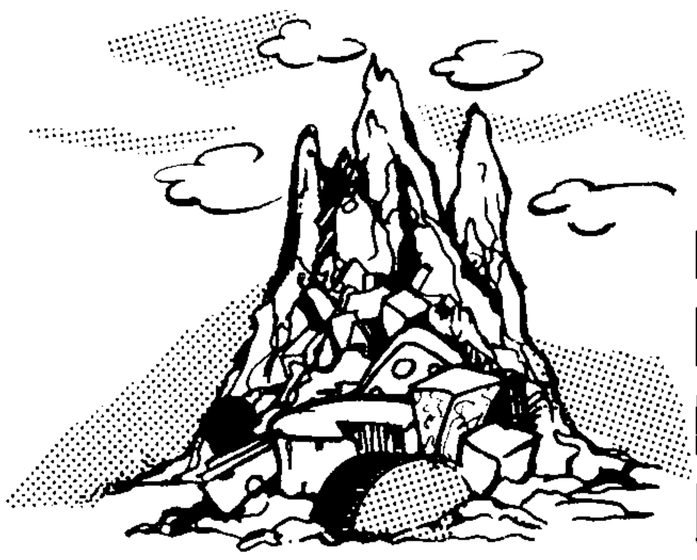
WIN A FREE TRIP TO EURODISMAL

YES! Win the holiday of a lifetime in Europe's No 1 Amusement Park. All you have to do is complete the form below and you could find yourself packing your bag for a magical weekend you'll never forget. Here are some of the amazing sights that you will see in Brussels.

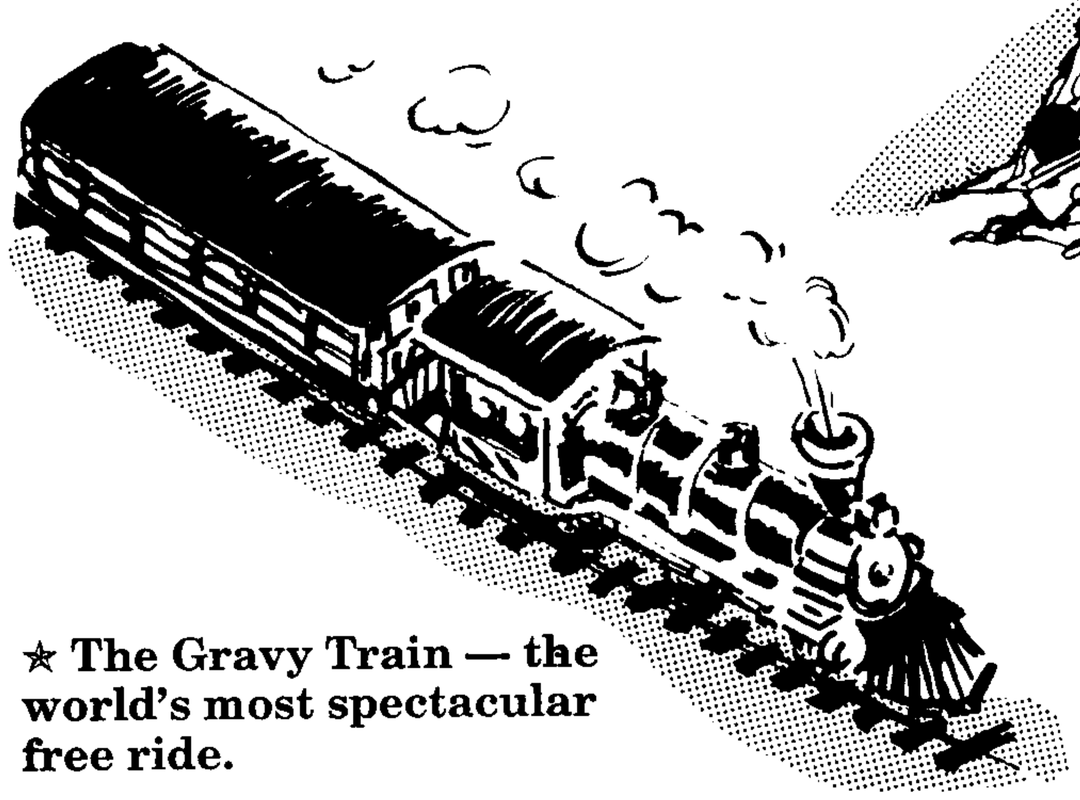
★ Jacques Delors, world-famous comic character. Shake hands with him as he wanders around telling you his Mickey Mouse ideas!



★ The Wine Lake — the deepest man-made lake on earth, filled to overflowing with all the wines of Europe.

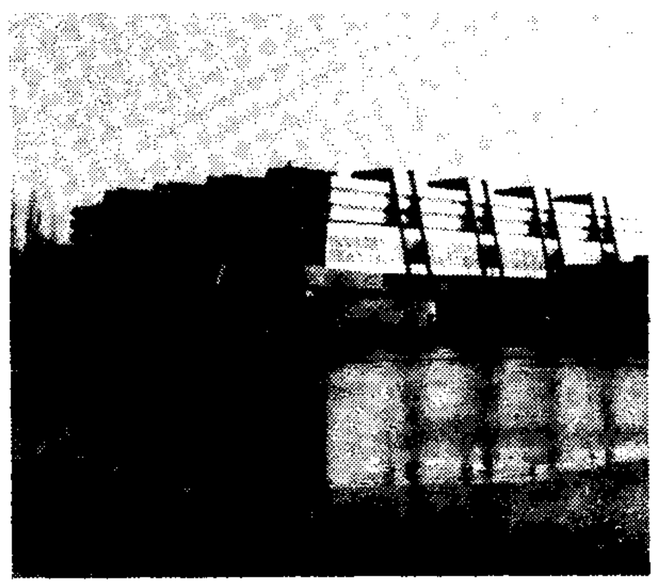


★ The Cheese Mountain. Millions of miles high, this Mozzarella Matterhorn is actually made of real cheese.



★ The Gravy Train — the world's most spectacular free ride.

★ The European Parliament. A fairy-tale castle where everyone is asleep all day. Can *you* wake them up?



★ And many more exciting spectacles, briefcases and grey suits.

I think Maastricht was a great success because . . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

I enclose cheque for £3798 to cover administrative costs.

NAME . . . . . .

ADDRESS . . . . . .

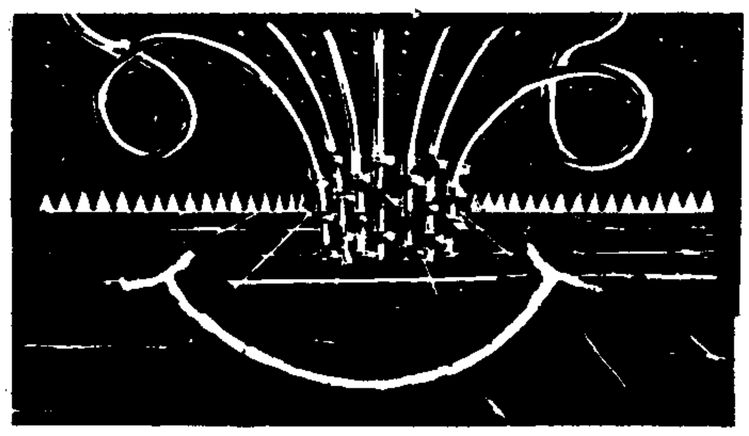
. . . . . .

. . . . . .

I have a mental age of less than 18.

Signed: . . . . . .

DIARY



SHIRLEY MACLAINE

We cannot smell with our eyes; our eyes help us to see.

All things come from within us; everything else comes from without.

The dog that barks not is the dog that stays silent.

We feel pain when we are hurt; but when we are not hurt, we feel no pain.

The sparrow sits on the fence. The fence does not sit on the sparrow. But if the fence chooses to sit on the sparrow, the sparrow will find it hard to fly.

I am sitting in a vehicle on Boulevard 909, travelling East on my way to the set of *Postcards from the Edge*, overachieving as usual. My vehicle runs over someone, not a star at all, but an ordinary human being, probably a woman. I love my fellow human beings on the most profound level, so I take the trouble to place my head out the vehicle window. Caringly, I look down to the place where the woman is lying under the wheel. As I see her there, I ponder the intricate impacts we have on one another. Total strangers, yet connected for one short moment in time by a car. Tears well in my eyes as my heart reaches out to her. But I don't want to let her see my *pain*. No I must use my inner resources to confront the trauma. "Drive on, please," I say, and as the chauffeur pulls away, and the woman's body recedes into the beautiful infinity of the car mirror, I feel enriched by the strength and resolution I have managed to draw from within. Funny thing, though. In all the minutes that woman was crying out, she never once mentioned loving my performance in *Terms of Endearment*. I guess she is just one of many, many people who are trapped in their own psyches, capable of thinking only of themselves, poor souls.

He who travels furthest must equip himself for the longest voyage.

He who wishes to come back must first go away.

On two legs, a man can walk a mile; but on one leg he must hop.

I am in Cambridge, England. Sitting at the feet of the most beautiful man in the world. Truly. His name? Professor Stephen Hawking. A man who will always be remembered for his literally earth-shattering book *The Time History of Briefs*. What, I am asking myself, am I, one of Hollywood's most celebrated overachievers, with sixty-nine starring movie roles to my credit, not forgetting six profoundly spiritual volumes of autobiography, doing sitting at the feet of this deeply immobilised person? Happily, I'm in communication with my unconscious, always have been, always will be. And the answer comes back: *because he's so beautiful.*

Inquisitive friends - friends searching like me for *meaning* within ourselves - have sometimes asked me what Stephen Hawking and I find to talk about. "A little thing called life," I tell them. "God. Inner oneness. Serendipity. Recognition of the adventure within. Self-discovery."

And here I am, back in Cambridge, England, once again revealing myself to this beautiful human being. "You know, Stephen," I say. "On a deep soul level, I feel we have met many times before, that I was once your child, and you were my sister. I guess you must feel the same way about me, am I right? Of course I am. And, you know, I believe that in each one of us there is an invisible thread, and that thread is attached to each of the planets in the solar system, and upon each of those marvellous planets sits a perfect, a perfect, a perfect — how shall I put it? — a perfect *replica* of our own inner perfection, and this replica guides us to a state of true love and peace on this planet earth, which, let's face it, Stephen, is the only planet earth we've got, so let's treat it as we would like to be treated ourselves. And you know, reading your beautiful book, I get a strong sense that on the most profound level this is what you yourself have been trying to communicate to the world in print, am I right?"

Poor Stephen. His voicebox seems to have got hopelessly jammed. All that is coming out is a bizarre noise sounding something like "nonononononononono" repeated over and over again. So, looking deeper into his eyes, I reach out to his electric cable and switch it off. "That's better, Stephen," I say. "Now, did I ever tell you my theory about the karma we can achieve through the creative combustion that comes from communicating with trees?"

At this point, Stephen's wheelchair seems to take on a life of its own, moving away from me. "Dear, oh, dear," I say. "We'll have to fix that, won't we?" So I stick a strong stick between the spokes so that it can go no further.

"Perfect," I say. "Now, where were we? Yes — I was about to say how your beautiful book taught me one helluva lot about, of all people, *myself...*"

A bucket contains water, but water does not contain a bucket.

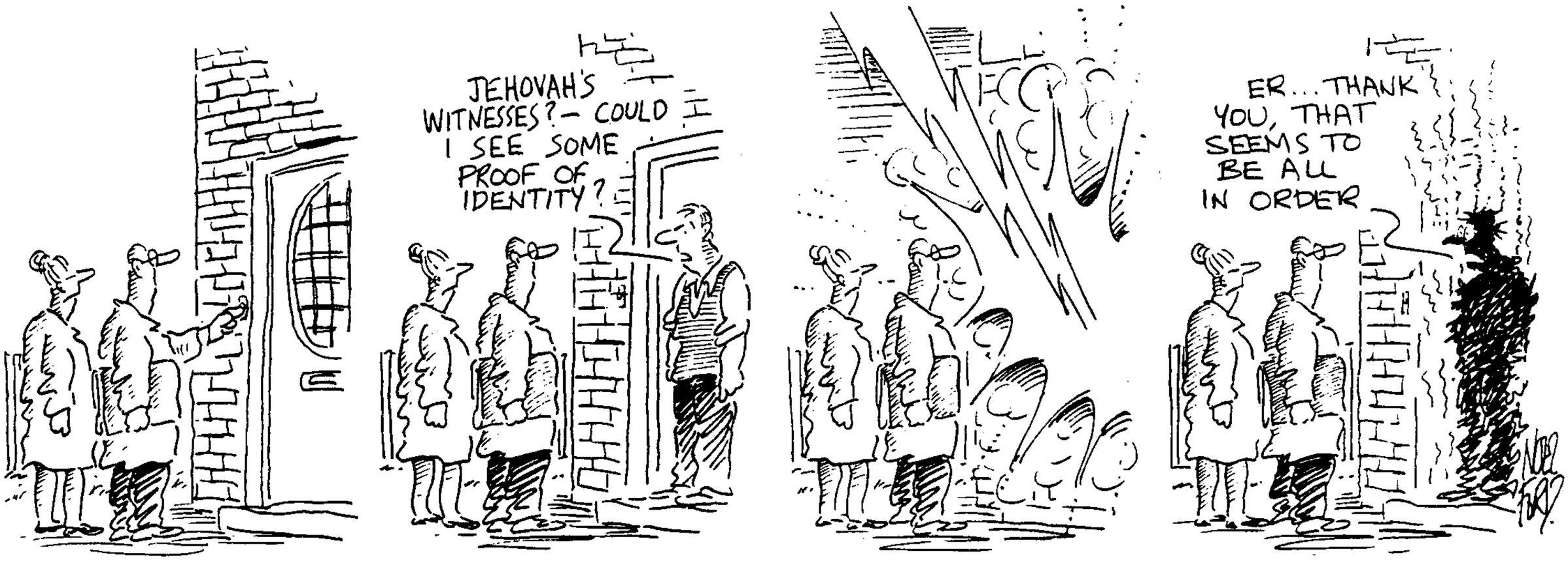
Those who wear shoes on their head must learn to expect blisters on their feet.

The path up the hill is not steep; it is the hill itself that is steep.

*Creative artists feel the need to tear back the layers of their psyches. It's like peeling onions, which is why our tears flow so freely, I guess. Long ago, pre-birth, I was imbued with the need to strip back the curtain on the mystery of the child within. Creative artists gather together for protection, to participate in the experience of self-discovery; we are always seeking to find out how our fellow artists are *feeling*. "How are you *feeling?*" I asked a good friend last time I saw her. "Only if you're feeling like I'm feeling, well, I guess to be honest I'm trying to come to terms with my capacity to overachieve, and I sometimes think I'm too frail, too sensitive to the fractures of the universe, and I never got to tell my Mom that she loved me, but I'm sorting it all out, my psyche's coping, so I'm glad you're well."

"Yes," replied my friend, my make-up artiste. "But more important, how are *you*?"

"Oh, let's not talk about me," I said, and at that moment I had the sensation of embarking on a great voyage of self-discovery across the valleys and mountains of my innermost projections. "But on the other hand..." I continued.



Literary Review

All mouth and trouser

A Dubious Legacy
Mary Wesley
(Bantam, £14.99)

YOU CAN find out how decrepit a horse is by inspecting its teeth. Exactly the same goes for human beings, Mary Wesley believes. All her characters bare their fangs, as they appear. Seldom has a writer shown such devotion to dental condition. It's just one of the things that have made her such a popular Oldie novelist.

Here comes the first person in *A Dubious Legacy*. "Margaret parted her red lips, showing excellent teeth." Here's her brother, Basil: "Good but slightly wayward teeth". Here's gay Jonathan: "His mouth, not so wide, showed excellent teeth." Here's a foreigner, Pilar: "She smiled, showing her large teeth." And her son, Ebro: "He had the same parrot jaw and outsize teeth." Here's Jonathan and his lover making up to Ebro: "The Jonathans said, 'Lovely boy, *lovely*' and 'My dear! What virility', and were rewarded by a flash of Ebro's enormous teeth."

When one of the young women complains about her father's attitude to her ageing mother, we know just what to expect. "His references to a crêpey neck, greying hair, double chin, veiny legs and yellowing teeth make me sick, she thought. The remarks about teeth are particularly vile." As we do when a boy and a girl hit it off. "He approved the pert nose and full mouth which, the evening before, he had kissed, sliding his tongue between the slightly irregular teeth, which had nipped quite sharply." And so we are not in the least surprised when an actual nag gets in on the act. "One of the horses leaned forward and nibbled her shirt, its grey lips making a plopping sound. It tweaked at the shirt with yellow teeth."

Mary Wesley's appeal seems so straightforward. Hosses, gels, rumpy pumpy in the country, all that — sex and class, nostalgia and gossip. She's a snob's delight, a *Sunday Telegraph* natural. For once, nobby readers are only too pleased to have the mucky bits. They always did think that sex was too good for the proles. That was what was so disgusting about the sixties — the plebs acted as though they'd invented it. Wesley could teach them a thing or two, eh, gamey old bird! Why, if you only knew — the things they got up to when they were young! In the proper place, of course, and without shouting about it from the rooftops.

Superficially, *A Dubious Legacy*, her eighth novel, fits this pattern nicely. The story runs from 1944 to 1990. Henry Tillotson owns a country house, Cotteshaw ("Its walls played host to roses and honeysuckle"). However, his life is blighted. During the war, he heard that the woman he loved had married another man. In deference to his father's dying request, he then married a woman he did not know, in order to give her British citizenship. Margaret turns out to be an uncooperative loony, who stays in bed all day and won't let him divorce her.

Two young couples visit one weekend and end up permanently sharing the house with Henry, in a kind of toffs' commune. Eventually, the two girls have children, their children have children, and the novel turns into a family saga. Henry remains chastely married to lunatic Margaret until she dies. Eventually, he dies himself, attended by the second and third generation — a kind of happy end.

In the meantime, there are all Wesley's usual accessories to enjoy. Loyal servants. Dear old gays. Faithful hounds. Henry's fine old Bentley. Skinny-dipping in the private lake. Grey flannels, Fair Isle sweaters, Dior dresses. Pheasants cackling in the wood. Bucolic dinner parties. No money worries. Eggs and bacon for breakfast.

But something odd happens in this book. There is real malignancy here. The character of Henry's wife is so evil as to make their marriage entirely implausible. She tears a pet cockatoo apart. She tries to drown a child. She bites and stabs Henry. We are expected to rejoice — as all the characters do — when she is drowned herself.

We are also expected to sympathise with Henry's life outside the marriage. Mad Margaret tells people he has sex with horses, though the girls don't quite believe it. " 'I believe that suggestion about horses is a hoax', said Antonia when he was out of earshot. 'It would be more likely to be dogs.' She joined Barbara in a refreshing burst of giggles."

In fact, dear old Henry succeeds in secretly seducing both these young wives and fathering their children without their husbands ever becoming aware of it. It is his own two children, "Clio" and "Hilaria", who unwittingly tend him on his deathbed.

All this is presented as a pastoral. According to the jacket, "It is the story of a man whose flaws are redeemed by kindness, generosity and wit. It is a gloriously funny, human story." Actually, beneath the rustic charm, it's peculiar and perverse, a lesson in immorality — an Oldie's fantasy of a most disturbing kind.

Mary Wesley is a genuine novelist in the sense that she does have a moral world to communicate and the means to do it. What seems to have escaped notice, as her giggling readers revel in her country house parties, is her extraordinary indecency. She may be long in the tooth, but she has a truly nasty bite.

Books & Bookmen

☐ **FOLLOWING our piece about Ted Hughes in the last *Eye*, 16 authors have written a letter to the *TLS* deploring "the sensationalism and slander to which the character of the Poet Laureate... has been subjected". It is untrue, they claim, "to insinuate that Ted Hughes has gone about bullying publishers" who issue books about his ex-wife, Sylvia Plath. "Will any publisher write to confirm that he has been bullied?"**

There are plenty who could. In 1971, the *Observer*'s serialisation of a book about Plath by A. Alvarez was discontinued after pressure from Ted Hughes on the paper's then editor, David Astor. In 1986, Hughes sent a bizarre letter to Chatto & Windus, who were about to publish Linda Wagner Martin's biography of Plath, threatening that anyone who worked on such a book risked "mental breakdown, neurotic collapse, domestic catastrophe".

A year later, Hughes issued a barrage of writs against Professor Trevor Thomas, an elderly friend of Plath who had tried to publish a sympathetic memoir of her. More recently, the author of yet another study of Plath, Jacqueline Rose, had a letter from Hughes warning that her book could be regarded as a justifiable cause of homicide.

One could also mention the bullying that Anne Stevenson received from the Hughes family when she wrote a book about Plath four years ago: she complained at the time that she had had to fight Olwyn Hughes, Ted's sister and chief guard-dog, "every step of the way". Oddly, this same Anne Stevenson is one of the signatories to last week's *TLS* letter.

Alas for her, this new tribute to the poet laureate's tolerant and pacific nature has been undermined almost at once: Hughes has now begun a lawsuit against yet another biographer of Sylvia Plath.

■ CHARLES GIDLEY may not be a household name except in his own household, but over the last decade he has been a not wholly unsuccessful HarperCollins novelist of the Ian St James variety.

His sixth novel, *The Crying of the Wind*, has just been published: a thumping 400-page doorstop in which Eddie Arturo McBastard Bell's outfit in Hammersmith must have invested a great deal — so much so that the publicity budget is zilch. Maybe McBastard thinks he can sell the 3,250 copies printed without any effort.

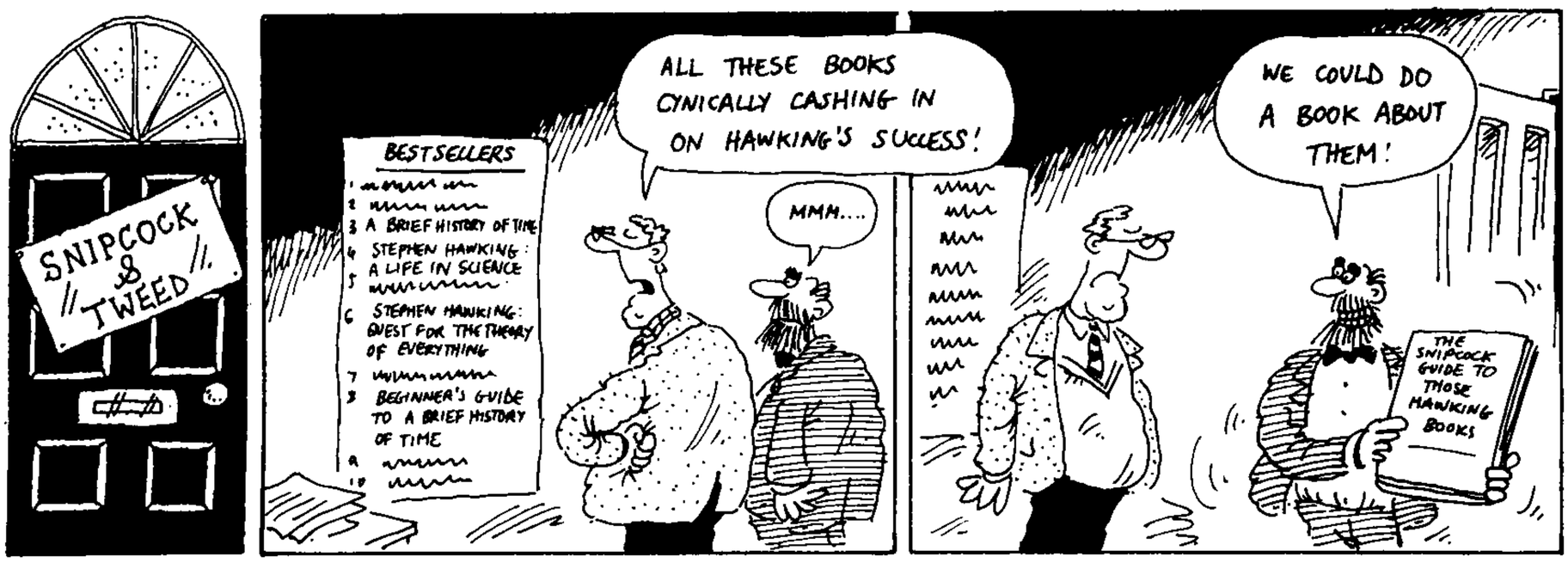
Gidley's new "editor", science fiction guru Malcolm Edwards, confided to the author's agent, Mike Shaw at Curtis Brown, that neither HarpicCollins nor Fontana (who have done the hearty bearded writer's paperbacks to date) wished to publish the author again; and not because he hasn't sold in the past. Gidley may have been sacked by his longtime publisher; in turn he has sacked his agent.

Could this have anything to do with the fact that much of the top sales brass at HarpicCollins, probably including McBastard, is masonic? The central character of *The Crying of the Wind* is a freemason, whose life and family are destroyed by the grand master of his lodge. None of this is mentioned on the book's blurb, no doubt so as not to alert masons at W H Smug.

A lot of folk have had it in for Gidley since his second novel, *The Raging of the Sea*, revealed the double standards and political expediency of the upper echelons of the Royal Navy at the time of the Falklands war. By a coincidence — or not, as they case may be — the general secretary of British freemasonry is one Commander Higham RN.

With the exception of *The Crying of the Wind*, all Gidley's books are suddenly and mysteriously out of print.

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
BESTSELLERS
1
2
3 A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME
4 STEPHEN HAWKING: A LIFE IN SCIENCE
5
6 STEPHEN HAWKING: QUEST FOR THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING
7
8 BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME
9
10
ALL THESE BOOKS CYNICALLY CASHING IN ON HAWKING'S SUCCESS!
MMM....
WE COULD DO A BOOK ABOUT THEM!
THE SNIPCOCK GUIDE TO THOSE HAWKING BOOKS

IN THE BACK

RAILWAYS

Clipped — route and branch

THE PRIME MINISTER'S much-trumpeted move to protect rail passengers is more interesting for its omissions. Here are five things you won't read about in the charter:

● JOHN MAJOR'S rail privatisation plan, to resurrect the old GWR et al, has finally been killed off, drowned no doubt in a butt of nostalgia. The field is thus clear for transport secretary Malcolm Rifkind's equally silly scheme, now known in Whitehall as the Sugar Plum Fairy approach, to dismember the rail network.

If the Tories win the general election, BR's plum routes will be sold off at prices low enough to attract the likes of Richard Branson, who has always had his eye on the Gatwick Express. The Victoria-Gatwick journey isn't long enough to justify bringing on the dancing girls, but there should be plenty of scope for a cabaret coach, hot towels and foot-rests on other Branson Rail routes.

Though InterCity is said to be profitable (by public sector standards), the great majority of its routes are under-capitalised. Any private operator who looks at the books is thus very unlikely to bid for the non-plums, even if a peerage or two is thrown in to win them over.

Taking the plums away will make the very large rump less profitable. Unless it is shut down, it will remain in public ownership and be run, with appropriate subsidy, by Rifraff's new Rail Track Authority, which will also be responsible for the loss-making commuter and regional rail routes.

● SIX MONTHS after Rifraff told the Tory party conference that the Channel tunnel rail link would be routed through Stratford to avoid disturbance in Kent and south-east London, absolutely nothing has happened.

There is no route map for the new line and still nothing happening on the ground. BR says it is still waiting to hear from the Government what its remit will be. The reality of course is that the alternative route was merely a political gimmick to reduce electoral damage — as the *Eye* explained on 3 January.

The Tory MP most exposed over the route, Gerald Bowden (Dulwich; majority: 180) has sent a circular to 30,000 homes — before the election has even been announced — entitled: "How the good news was broken to the residents of Dulwich." He says: "I know that you, like me, will be delighted by this decision. It is good to know that we have been successful in persuading ministers of the correctness of our cause." The cause of... er... winning the election, presumably.

● MALCOLM RIFKIND is soon to be embarrassed by the closure of a major commuter line and two stations in marginal-ridden London.

Having gambled that few voters would notice the closure of British Rail services at Westbourne Park, west London, since the tube outlet is unaffected, the transport secretary has discovered that his pre-election strategy could be messed up by BR's application to withdraw the Watford to Liverpool Street branch of the North London Railway and close Primrose Hill station.

With typical cynicism British Rail has reduced services on the line in recent years, although the route could solve the capital's transport planners' age-old concerns for bringing in thousands of commuters from the suburbs to the City.

A few years ago BR almost wrecked the line by allowing the useful Broad Street terminus to be demolished to make way for the hugely lucrative Broadgate development. Three miles of track joining Broad Street to the North London railway in Dalton were also uprooted. But to allow North London railway services from Watford and Richmond to reach the City — the biggest commuter belt in Britain — BR spent £2.5 million constructing a spur to connect the North London track with the Liverpool Street line. It will soon be redundant.

Ironically, BR admits that the closure of Watford-Liverpool Street won't save any money — it just doesn't have the trains to service it! Attention is now on the mealy-mouthed Rifraff. Will he approve closure, despite the opposition of the London Regional Passengers' Association, which has accused BR of treating users "disgracefully" — or will he shunt the proposal into the sidings until the crucial floating suburban votes are cast?

● NINE MONTHS ago in a much-publicized speech Malcolm Rifkind said he wanted to see more freight returning to the rails. Here is a list of all the freight lost to the railways since that famous speech:

* SPEEDLINK: BR's wagonload freight network closed down only two weeks later resulting in 150,000 extra lorry movements on Britain's roads per year.

* MOD TRAFFIC: 19 defence establishment rail links were severed. The result? Many more lorries on the road, including convoys of dangerous armaments.

* CONTAINER TRAFFIC: Freightliner depots at Bristol, Ellesmere Port, Gushetfaulds, Glasgow, closed. Crewe-Holyhead route, carrying heavy Irish traffic, closed. Loads now go by road.

* AGGREGATES AND FUELS: Bulk train movements have been transferred to road: Lavant, Sussex — the gravel trade; oil terminals at Islip, Skipton, Thame; coal at Llantwit Major; cement terminals at Chinnor, Plymstock; Fletton Flyash trains; Pelaw-Ferryhill freight line; the closure of the Hamworthy branch and freight line (running five heavy steel trains a week).

* REDMIRE: The enormous North Yorkshire limestone trains are to be put on the roads across the Yorkshire Dales National Park. An extra 30,000 lorry movements per year in James Heriot land.

Rifraff gushed in his speech about a time when private capital would come flooding into BR and transform its freight operations into privatised heaven. Things haven't quite worked out that way. Tiger Rail, the private company charged with transforming the business — and handed many of BR's most lucrative routes — has just gone bust. Result? Even more lorries on the roads!

● ONCE UPON a time customers sued manufacturers if items they had bought didn't work. As revealed in *Eyes passim*, this custom has been reversed in the crazy world of privatised British Rail Engineering (BREL).

Thanks to incredibly sweetened sales documents drawn up by then junior transport minister Michael Portillo (he flogged off BREL to Tory chums in the road transport lobby, eg Trafalgar House), it looks as if BREL is set to sue BR for the costs it incurred having to rectify faulty equipment in the Class 158 diesel units it delivered 18 months late to BR.

According to Roger Ford, the distinguished technical editor of *Modern Railways*, BREL's claim against BR could reach the staggering sum of £100 million. On average, each individual diesel unit had 141 design faults when delivered from BREL to BR. Thus not only has BR lost an estimated £20 million in revenue from the late delivery of the 158s — and had to endure the ire of thousands of dissatisfied passengers — but it is now going to have to pay BREL £100 million compensation for the poor quality of BREL's own work.

Sadly, this is not the end of the fiasco. The toilet units have seized up and even some of the major rectifications BREL has had to undertake on the 158 are themselves starting to fall to bits. Presumably BR is now going to have to pay BREL not only for the rectifications to its fleet, but for the rectifications to the rectifications.

Another feather in the cap of privatisation!

MADCHESTER

Olympian heights of folly

WHAT on earth possessed the Government to hand over an astonishing £105 million towards Madchester's Olympic bid?

During a visit to the city at the end of February, John Mayor announced that the Government had pledged £55 million to the city's risible bid. A few days later, not to be outdone in the public spending spree stakes, Tarzan swung into action with a £50 million bounty from his environment department for urban regeneration and a warning that the city's growing litter mountains should be flattened before the International Olympic Committee pays a visit.

But £105 million does seem a lot to pay to secure 12 north-western marginal seats, even if Manchester's Labour council leader, Graham Stringer, has been the most vociferous arguer against the vote-buying line. Naturally what Stringer forgot to point out was that £2 million of the £100 million-plus payout will go on jetting Stringer and fellow Mancunians around the world in the wake of unimpressionable Olympic committee members.

If the Government is determined to pay whatever it costs to win over the committee and bring the 2000 Olympics to Britain, it will need to equip the Manchester liggers with a lot more than £2 million. Unfortunately, Manchester, with its long post-war record of municipal incompetence and commercial small-mindedness, has no chance of winning the nomination after securing a measly five votes in Tokyo to stage the '96 Games.

What has gone unnoticed amid press hysteria over the largesse is that the city's last batch of half-baked proposals, deemed so important by the city's Olympic committee before the Tokyo embarrassment, have been scrapped. These would have seen the games staged *outside* the city on the banks of the rotting Manchester Ship Canal. But for the year 2000 the Manchester committee has chosen to spend its government cash on clearing desolate industrial wasteland next to some old gasworks in east Manchester to make way for the main Olympic stadium as well as building a 20,000-seater indoor arena and, laughably, something called a velodrome.

The new Manchester Olympic site could not be more inappropriate. The nearby Victoria Station, once the finest outside London, has just been closed to inter-city trains and will soon take no more local services. The nearest motorway is at least five miles away and no new roads are planned. Ultimately the site will be accessible only by the ludicrous new tram system due to open in Manchester this spring — a super-efficient *four years* behind schedule.

CURSE OF GNOME

Sting RAI

IN AUGUST 1990, the *Eye* reported how the Old Harrovian share-dealing spiv RAI Hamilton and his wife Margarita had doctored the accounts for their recording studio company Swanyard Studios plc to enable them to raise more than £5 million in a couple of rights issues on the Third Market.

As soon as our article was published, Margarita Hamilton assured journalists and shareholders that she would sue the *Eye*. A libel writ was duly issued and a statement of claim followed. The *Eye* responded with a detailed defence of justification.

Swanyard subsequently announced a profit of £278,000 for 1990. But now, more than a year-and-a-half since that announcement, Swanyard's auditors, Stoy Hayward, have qualified their original report. Instead of a £278,000 profit, Swanyard's 1990 accounts show, er, a £2.79 million loss. No doubt this includes the legal costs incurred by Swanyard on behalf of its unfortunate shareholders in suing the *Eye*.

DIPLOMACY

With friends like this...

BY THEIR friends will you know them... and the adage applies equally to Croatia's president Franjo Tudjman as to his statesman chums in Europe.

In his last book, *Wastelands*, Tudjman wrote that the Jews were a genocidal people who may themselves have murdered most of the Serbs and gypsies who disappeared in the extermination camp of Jasenovac during the second world war. Now the David Irving think-alike is busy renaming the streets and schools of his republic in honour of racially and ideologically pure Croats.

In Split, for example, Nikola Tesla Street, named after the scientist, has been renamed Ante Starcevic Street — after the intellectual father of Croatian fascism. Tesla invented improvements to bulbs and transformers, as well as the high-frequency coil which bears his name. Unfortunately for the regime in Zagreb, Tesla was born at Smiljan, Croatia, into a Serb (ie Orthodox Christian) family and until the end of his life in exile in the United States described himself as "a Yugoslav first, a Serb second and Croat third".

Ante Starcevic, on the other hand, was a half-baked 19th century racial theorist who claimed that the Croats were rightful lords of all the South Slav peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina and even in Serbia proper. Charmingly, Starcevic claimed that the Serbs, who differ from Croats only in their religion, were a "race of slaves, the most loathsome of beasts... a breed fit only for the slaughterhouse." And he popularized the slogan of "Serbs to the willows!" — meaning string 'em up on a willow tree. His Party of Croatian Rights inspired the wartime Ustasha leader Ante Pavelic and has now reappeared in Zagreb, its black-uniformed storm troopers, of HOS, sporting Ustasha insignia.

There used to be a school in Zagreb named after Miloj Pavlovic, the headmaster of a school at Kragujevac in Serbia. As a reprisal for a guerilla attack on 20 October 1941 the Germans shot 7,000 males in Kragujevac, including Pavlovic and all the boys in his school.

The Miloj Pavlovic School has now been renamed after Mile Budak, a pious Catholic novelist who was minister for education and cults (ie. religion) in the Ustasha government of the Independent State of Croatia, then allied to the Germans who shot down Serb schoolboys. It was Budak who first proclaimed, in a speech at Gospic in June 1941, the Ustasha policy towards the Serbs in the independent state: "Convert a third, expel a third and kill a third". On another occasion, Budak said: "For the minorities — Serbs, Jews and Gypsies, we have three million bullets". The citizens of Dubrovnik have also renamed a street after the pious Budak.

There is mounting speculation that Tudjman may soon name other streets and schools after the foreign statesmen who have helped him win recognition for Croatia. The most fancied candidates are:

● Kurt Waldheim of Austria. As a Wehrmacht officer Waldheim fought to preserve the Independent State of Croatia, winning particular commendation from some of the Ustasha leaders. Like many fellow Austrians, such as the late A. Hitler, Waldheim combines friendly feelings towards the Croats with detestation of the Serbs who defied the Teutons in 1914 and again in 1941. Austria's generous help in money and clandestine arms enabled Tudjman to make his bid for independence last June. German and Austrian diplomatic backing helped ensure recognition early this year.

● French National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen. Way back in 1963 Le Pen's publishing house brought out a book, *Martyred Croatia*, adorned with the red-and-white chessboard flag which was Ante Pavelic's symbol during the war and has now reappeared, striking dread in Serbs, like Hitler's swastika did with the Jews. The jovial Le Pen, who shares Tudjman's view that the Holocaust was grossly exaggerated, has visited Zagreb and plugged the cause of Croatia in his publications.

● Margaret Thatcher, the former Conservative prime minister of Great Britain. She met Tudjman in

London last spring and egged him on to declare independence. He returned home saying the "Iron Lady" was on his side. Later Mrs Thatcher called not only for British recognition but arms supplies to Croatia, which, she fondly imagines, is run on sound Thatcherite principles.

NHS FINANCE

Public purse — strings attached

THE FINANCIAL wizard of the health service, Sir James Ackers (see *Eyes passim*), has once again showed the world his skill at making public money disappear.

Ackers is of course no stranger to *Eye* readers. He chairs the West Midlands regional health authority (his only job after his own truck-leasing business went bust last autumn) and was originally appointed by Norman Fowler as part of the Tory drive to bring business "flair" into the NHS. Ackers also chairs Birmingham's Prince's Trust (it has just plunged into the red) and two years ago he sold the RHA's computer bureau as Qa Business Services, which collapsed losing 300 ex-NHS jobs.

Now a new loss-making enterprise has emerged — the massive Healthtrac computer bureau development project aimed at linking hospitals direct with their suppliers. The £6 million system has been plagued by problems — all forecast by outside computer experts who knew it was too complex.

Ackers has already been criticised in a devastating report by Wolverhampton district health authority chairman Roy Carver for appointing two American firms, AT&T Istel and URL consultants without proper authority.

Ackers had claimed Healthtrac would make money for the RHA because suppliers would have to buy into the system. In practice the big suppliers ganged up and boycotted it until the price dropped. The small suppliers, who could not afford the necessary £25,000, were forced out of the running, effectively creating near-monopolies for the big firms who can now set the prices they like.

The latest news is even more devastating. The Government has just taken health supplies out of the hands of regional health authorities and handed responsibility to the new NHS Supplies Authority Executive, split into six regions. And the first action of the central region's new chief executive, Ian Bradshaw? To suspend Healthtrac for a "full evaluation".

The word is that it will soon be buried forever — along with Ackers' other works.

SEWAGE

Floating voters

THE BUREAUCRATS of South West Water have announced that they are going to speed ahead with their scheme to fill St Ives Bay with shit ("treated waste water"), encouraged perhaps by the 26-2 vote by the local Penwith council that they find an alternative.

Excited by their new big business role, the water company directors have been having secret talks with likely contractors. They are offering a "negotiated contract" — ie no tenders and no competition — and are prepared to spend as much as £125 million of ratepayers' money in this very poor region.

The alternative schemes proposed by the council and supported by just about all sensible people in the South West are based on smaller sewage treatment plants which take all the infection out of the sewage and reduce it, in effect, to drinking water. Even the very highest figure for the cost of this scheme is just over half what South West Water is preparing to lash out on its brilliant plan to divert the sewage from the south coast to the north, where more people swim.

Why should South West Water care? The new privatisation legislation puts the company beyond the reach of the public, who have no alternative but to pay the charges. The various public bodies set up to keep a check on the excesses of the new water companies — OFWAT, for instance, or the National Rivers Authority (chairman, free enterprise nutter and former Tory cabinet minister Nicholas Edwards, now Lord Crickhowell) — have indicated that filthy water in one of the most popular bathing areas in the country has nothing to do with them. Both have already turned down appeals for intervention.

What is more, there is no limit to the outside businesses South West Water can engage in. Some of their more preposterous property speculations have already been revealed in the *Eye*, and the company has capped them all with a 20 per cent investment in an independent television station. All this, plus the ludicrously costly "outfall", will cost money, and South West Water is showing neither fear nor favour in making the people pay.

In a leaflet distributed to all consumers SWW's managing director, Bill Fraser, proudly announces that he is increasing charges to pay for a "massive clean-up programme". So water charges are going up by a fantastic 18 per cent, more than four times the inflation rate.

Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, has been petitioned to intervene to stop the scheme. He won't — but he won't say as much just at the moment. He realises that the only possible benefit which could come from South West Water's obstinacy is that former *Torygraph* political correspondent David Harris, the Tory MP for the area, might lose his seat.

CANARY WHARF

The brothers are grim...

TROUBLE is mounting for the Reichman brothers from Toronto and their huge white elephant in London's Docklands, the Canary Wharf development.

While Canary Wharf continues to receive bad press, the brothers' company, Olympia and York, has seen the credit rating of its property empire savaged in Canada and its property values halved. Not only have the brothers been forced to sell non-core business to raise cash for the property sector, but now apparent trouble with London Underground Ltd (LUL) is casting an ominous shadow over the whole Canary Wharf project.

LUL has agreed to build a Tube extension to Canary Wharf for which O&Y is due to pay a decent part. Treasury and transport department approval has been given and the funds are in place, but O&Y wants the line extension managed by a company *not* connected to London Underground, just as the Docklands light railway has been hived off.

Strangely, the extension agreement has not been signed yet and LUL is now showing a distinct reticence in completing the agreement. No one at O&Y knows what is going on or why telephone calls have not been returned.

LUL has also tried to impose impossible conditions on O&Y, such as demanding an undertaking that O&Y will not sue LUL if, as a result of tunnelling, there is structural damage to any of the buildings above.

There is a cruel speculation that LUL is simply waiting until after the election. If there is a change of government the whole question of privatisation will be dead. And if O&Y doesn't get the transport deal it wants for Canary Wharf, the project could quickly die as well.

In the City

IT IS FAR from certain that the full facts have yet emerged concerning Polly Peck's Asil Nadir and his payments to the Conservative Party. The mini-furore created by the *This Week* TV programme detailing £440,000 in undeclared political contributions between 1985 and 1990 overlooked several important questions.

Most significant is the contradiction between the initial disclosure last September of Nadir's secret courting of Tory favours (such as a hoped-for knighthood) and the *This Week* disclosures. The *Daily Mail*, once firmly in the Nadir camp, revealed last year that the man from Del Monte "gave Tories £1.5 million over five years". That leaves some £1 million unaccounted for as far as the Tories are concerned — if the *Mail*/Nadir version is to be believed.

The *Mail* story was clearly based on access to internal Polly Peck documents from company files in Northern Cyprus, which at that time had been kept closed to outside investigators. So why should the contributions be seemingly so exaggerated? The answer could be that those contributions confirmed by the Conservative Party treasurers to the Polly Peck administrators only deal with donations made by the company. They may not cover any contributions made by Nadir from personal as distinct from company funds.

Two clues point in that direction. A "thank-you" letter from Sir Peter Blaker MP, chairman of the Conservative Industrial Fund, in November 1989. According to the cheques confirmed to the administrators, no company payments were made in 1989. Nadir was also reported in 1990 previously to have made an annual covenant of £7,500 a year.

It should also not be forgotten that initially the Tories tried to distance themselves from their faithful benefactor, claiming via *The Guardian* merely that they had come close to extracting "a huge donation" in 1990. Clearly the £80,000 Nadir paid through the Jersey bank account of Polly Peck's Unipac Packaging Industries subsidiary in March 1990 either did not count as "huge" or had somehow been overlooked.

While it is not beyond possibility that the missing million is a figment of a tycoon's imagination — like much of what the *Daily Mail* printed about Polly Peck — there is no doubting that the Tories saw Nadir as a big fish who could be hooked by the unspoken promise for all big contributors — a place in the honours list.

A benefactor scorned could be a very dangerous witness, as the Tories could discover when and if Nadir goes to trial. Happily for them it will be well after the election.

WHILE the Tories cringe over their cosying up to a Turkish Cypriot charged with the theft of £100 million, the Labour Party can breathe a sigh of relief over investigations by Scotland Yard's fraud squad into Greek Cypriot Charilaos Costa — a man Neil Kinnock once hailed as a genius but who is now a fugitive.

Costa made the Kinnock connection through opening two factories in his South Wales constituency. He became friendly with the Labour leader and made donations to the Labour Party. But that was all before his companies collapsed last year and he fled to Cyprus.

Three men have already been charged with conspiring with Costa to defraud National Westminster of £3.5 million. Further charges are likely concerning £7 million owed by Costa companies to Union Discount. There is also a £1.5 million VAT probe by the Customs.

But it seems highly unlikely that "Harry" Costa will face trial in Britain and therefore embarrass Kinnock as either Labour leader or prime minister. Costa has dual British and Cypriot nationality and as such the Cypriot authorities have indicated they would not cooperate in any bid from Scotland Yard for extradition.

THE GUINNESS and Blue Arrow fiascos have highlighted the failure of the Serious Fraud Office to deliver on the promise that it would expedite and improve the prosecution of major fraud. But it is not just these high profile failures or partial successes which demonstrate the SFO's woeful performance. Its own statistics reveal a similar tale hidden away in its annual report which otherwise gushes with self-congratulatory data.

Since 1988, the latest annual report proudly announces: "The SFO has been responsible for 53 trials involving 119 defendants of whom 79 have been convicted." This would suggest a success ratio of two out of three — a result which is no cause for celebration when compared with the pre-SFO figures claimed by Scotland Yard of nine out of ten. But the reality is far worse.

What the SFO figures disguise is how many guilty pleas are included within that conviction figure. The SFO report reveals that for 1990-91, 22 defendants put their hands up out of a total of 72. Of the remaining 50 who fought, the SFO only managed to get down 23 — a "success" rate of less than half.

And it is not improving. A similar conviction at trial rate of around 46 percent was registered in the two previous years — ignoring guilty pleas the score card shows SFO 11, Defendants 13. Total score after three years therefore: SFO 34, Defendants 40.

Will the report for this year be any better? It doesn't look like it. The score in major trials after Blue Arrow, Guinness and Barlow Clowes reads SFO 6, Defendants 13 (including those like Mayhew, Seelig, Spens and two Barlow Clowes defendants not proceeded against).

No wonder the SFO opened for business on April Fool's Day.

THE *Sunday Times* has once again suffered from Saatchi schizophrenia.

On 16 February the business section's advertising correspondent Rufus Olins trumpeted that Charles S. had been told to "shape up or ship out" because of the troubled company receiving less than full value for his £312,000 salary.

Unfortunately Olins ignored that Maurice and Charles had sacrificed *half* their salary last year. The article was full of talk about Charles's perks, lavish spending on art and his entourage. All these, it said, were under threat, even his executive directorship.

The following week confused readers found business editor John Cassidy penning a somewhat different story under the headline "Saatchi's hidden persuader". Eulogies were printed to Charles's "unheralded and hidden" but "crucial" contribution. His salary, correctly given this time, was more than justified. The article was in effect a grovelling apology. In case anyone missed it, the grovelling was flagged on the first page of the business section with the blurb that Charles is "one of the company's most vital assets".

Presumably this change in view owes nothing to the presence of Saatchi hagiographer Ivan Fallon as deputy editor of the *Sunset Times*.

THE GREAT financier and ecologist Sir James Goldsmith is hosting a "save the world" summit at his Mexican Xanadu later this month for right-thinking environmentalists such as CNN boss Ted Turner and filmstar Robert Redford.

It will be interesting to see if Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of France's extreme right-wing Front National will be on the guest list. Earlier this year he told the *Financial Times* how much Goldsmith "shares my conviction" on AIDS as the most important phenomenon of the millennium.

Unlikely to be invited, however, is Goldsmith's former business associate, since convicted fraudster Charles Keating.

Also unlikely to be present at this ecological summit will be any representatives from the Jawoyn tribe of Australian Aborigines. Newmont Mining, a major gold mining group in which Goldsmith is the largest shareholder, a director and chairman of its strategy committee, is part of a consortium appealing against a government ban on mining for gold and platinum on a Jawoyn sacred site at Coronation Hill in the Northern Territory. No doubt mining will be on the Mexican agenda.

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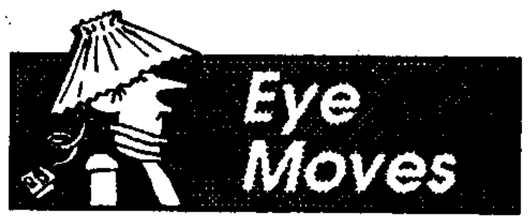

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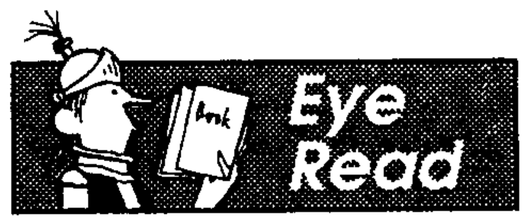

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THE WILLIAM RUSHTON Archive will open on March 18th at JACK DUNCAN BOOKS, 36 Fossgate, York YO1 2TF. It will be a permanent exhibition of all Rushton's original drawings for the Eye, the Telegraphs, the Independent, Literary Review etc. all for sale on the walls of one of York's famous secondhand bookshops.

GRANDCHILDREN OF ALBION antho jazz/poetry Mon 23 March Hard Edge Club, Red Lion, Gt Windmill St, W1 8.30 till late Condell MacRae Sparkes M Horo £3/£1.50; Thurs 26 March Waterstone Bkshop, 9 Garrick St WC2 from 6.30-8.30 F Pitt-Kethley + jazzpo &c FREE (GofA book £11 post free from NEW DEPARTURES, Bisley, Glos GL6 7BU).

FEMALE, 30, slim, gentle, affectionate, earnestly seeking London professional (lawyer?) (forever) address? Box 2489.

ATTRACTIVE very caring public school (45), now destitute seeks solvent lady view marriage (Midlands). Box 2589.

ATTRACTIVE, affectionate, independent woman, many interests, seeks intelligent, interesting n/s man 38-53, sense of humour, London westwards. Box 2689.

EXPATRIATE Scots male, 34, still relatively sane, Edinburgh based, seeks female who likes enjoying herself, for wining, dining, etc. Photo appreciated. Box 2889.

ESSEX businessman who's forgotten how to relax seeks attractive, intelligent lady (25-45) with a sense of humour and adventure. Photo. ALA. Box 3089.

SELECT, DARK maiden, with shining eyes seeks charismatic young gentleman, circa 30. Box 3189.

BRIGHT beautiful blonde, 35, wants warm witty wonderfully wealthy wooer. N Wales. Box 4589.

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BBC Radio 5

INTELLIGENT, attractive, professional lady, 26, vivacious, seeks educated humorous man, with urge to travel. Enjoys good company, food, wine, live music, modern literature, theatre, mountains, sea cities and political arguments. Photo appreciated. Midlands/London. Box 3389.

WANTED not dead but very much alive, loving, affectionate, affluent, good looking, fit male by female of same, for cuddly relationship. North east, North south, age immaterial. Box 3489.

WANTED — one London or M/C based Arab business man (professional), aged 45-50 years. Attractive appearance - single status essential (must be genuine) photo appreciated. Box 3589.

I'M 30, MALE, professional, very solvent and experienced. You're youthful, female, intelligent, honest and inexperienced. Physical attraction is very important to us both. I want me to be your first and you to be my last. Manchester. Box 3689.

GUY, 40, tall, attractive, intelligent, graduate, would like to meet a very attractive female, 25-35. Intelligence, sensitivity and sense of humour vital. I have a wide range of interests including sailing, roading, travel — nice letter and photo please. Scotland. Box 3789.

DISCREET LIAISON wanted by guy: 40, fit, tall, intelligent, graduate. Would like to meet similar very attractive female, sensitivity and sense of humour important, letter and photo please. Central Scotland. Box 3889.

PROFESSIONAL bachelor, home loving and outdoor type, handsome, interests include countryside, gardening, visiting olde worlde and historical buildings and generally enjoying life, seeks soulmate. Photo appreciated. Box 3989.

CALL THIS SW geezer. Old fashioned but he actually wants wife, 2.4 kids etc. (draws line at Sierra). Vitals: 6ft, 30, small pad, romantic, own pheromones. Box 4089.

ATTRACTIVE, successful Englishman, 45, experience of Far East, Orient and India seeks lady with similar interests for long term meaningful relationship. Box 4189.

FANCY AN easygoing male graduate? I'm 29, 5'11" optimistic and occasionally athletic. Attractive gentle ladyfriend desired. Box 4289.

SINGLE, professional chap (28), seeks similar chappess in mid Kent, for long walks, log fires and fun. Box 4389.

STRONG WILLED male seeks gentle female for imposing daytime scenarios. Northern England, anywhere. Box 4489.

CENTRAL BRUSSELS based lady, 36, seeks international businessman for lonely evenings. CC, PO Box 1711050, Brussels, Belgium.

ARE YOU THAT someone special? Professional guy 36yrs 5'10" graduate, solvent, told good-looking, enjoys theatre, eating out, alfresco, as well as evenings in, seeks slim, attractive, stimulating lady 27+ for friendship, fun and romance. (SW15/London). Photo and long letter please. Box 5789.

BLUE-EYED Anglaise (22a) veut parler/discuter/rigoler avec un homme spirituel/sexy/grand. Paris/Londres/partout. Boite 5889.

FEMALE, (30), slim, warm, funny, gentle, seeking London professional (Lawyer, City?). Address? Box 5989.

PRESENTABLE man, early fifties, separated, solvent, healthy, gentle, literate, thoughtful, smoking; seeks personable lady companion to enhance (or supplant!) an abiding interest in gardening, bridge, music, country living. SW Scotland, Cumbria but mobile. Box 6089.

PRETTY female graduate (31) fun, discerning, seeks tall handsome male graduate N/S, slightly arrogant, 30-38 for witty repartee in SW London. Photo please. Box 6189.

MERSEYSIDE male, intelligent, leftish, thirties, seeks contact with female. Age, status immaterial. Box 6289.

CIVILISED 63 yr old gentleman, 6' tall, slim build, seeks attractive lady of wealth for whom return on investment in human terms more important than financial. Box 6389.

SARTRE seeks de Beauvoir. Long cafe conversations, french films, travel, passion. Age 34, slim 5'10", fair hair. London area. Box 6489.

WANTED:
crazy woman.
Box 9889.

COMPANY DIRECTOR early 40s, seeks relationship with fun loving attractive lady 25-40. Must be intelligent with a sense of humour. To enjoy wining, dining, music and foreign travel. Photo and letter essential (with telephone number). Reply Box 6589.

ATHLETIC, educated, blonde female, seeks athletic, very attractive male with wicked sense of humour, must be into sex and loaded. Box 2989.

PERSONABLE graduate, 48, seeks Joanna Lumley alterante to help sail yacht, collect antiques and more this summer. M25 area. Photo/phone. Box 6789.

HANS SOLO, 34, 6'+, handsome, tired of drifting in orbit and talking to Chewbacca seeks Princess Leia interested in sport, theatre, live music and supernova romance. Bristol/S West. Transmit photo. Box 6889.

TALL, goodlooking, affluent male (30) seeks well-educated beautiful slag (20-30). Central London. Box 6989.

BRIGHT, LIVELY gorgeous lady lawyer, late 20s enjoys all the good things in life would like to meet exceptionally intelligent, amusing, handsome, professional man on same wavelength (will compromise on handsome). London/SE, discretion assured. Box 7089.

STRIKING red-head, bored with convention seeks "partner in crime" to live life to the full. Box 7189.

ATTRACTIVE warm, intelligent Cotswolds blonde, 43, seeks tall professional unattached man. No one night stands please. Box 7289.

URGENTLY REQUIRED, intelligent, attractive, humorous, sensual friend and live-out lover, 45-55 who could become live-in for similar (adventurous and successful creative woman based Midlands and London). Photo and phone number please. Box 2588.

EDUCATED professional man, 32, nominally tied but genuine, NS, presentable, seeks open-minded and gentle lady for something meaningful and lasting. Will reply. London/South. Box 4689.

LADY, decent sort, attractive, affectionate, needs man of intelligence, wit, charm, all usual trimmings, 38-55. Box 2789.

AN ADVENTURE? Goodlooking, athletic, male lawyer, 34, seeks smart, sophisticated but unfulfilled woman for discreet liaison. Photo. Box 4889.

CLASSICAL YANK Virgo musician (39) ever-so-slightly aggrieved that the prospective Mrs Bach has not yet responded to previous Eye entreaties. He's sensitive, good-humoured, one-off, single; a handsomely statuesque teddy-bear (big man with big need!) blessed with gobsmacking eyes and other commendable features and continues to search the world for a member of the fairer sex to play fantasies and fugues with forever. Mrs Bach should be between 25-40, European (preferably Scandinavian), without issue, well read, sensual and hopefully exquisite in every way. Photo/letter/phone and/or fax guarantees sincere reply. Take a chance. Please let hopeful Teddy hear! Box 4989.

NH GENTLEMAN rider; sagittarian, 47: fit active and complete: just released by trainer so available for spare rides with view to long stable retainer. N Yorks. Box 5089.

ENGLISH ROSE seeks Irish rover. Box 5189.

ATTRACTIVE affluent gentleman, 37, seeks girl for fun, discreet naughty liaisons. Central London. Box 5289.

MAN, 32, solvent, humorous, seeks slim attractive female, 23-33, for usual pleasures and pastimes. Photo appreciated. London. Box 5389.

COVENTRY-BASED female, 48, professional, seeks left-wing, intelligent male, 45+ with interest in classical music. Photo appreciated. Box 5489.

ATTRACTIVE, classy 23 year old brunette, wishes to meet well educated professional genuine older man for romantic and sincere future. Photo if poss. Box 5589.

MALE, 45, energy to spare for slim, attractive lady 35+ London/SE. Discreet daytime dalliance preferable. Laughter essential. Photo/phone appreciated. Box 5689.

"After much deliberation and several stiff scotches I invested £20. Talk about casting my nets! I hauled in a British Diplomat. . ."
Eye Love Advertiser

46, SMALL, dark, funny, sad. Would like to meet interesting man, preferably younger. Box 2189.

TALL SLIM professional male, 42, goodlooking, warm, humorous and lively N/S, many and varied interests, seeks a slim attractive, ideally curvy female. Photo. London. Box 2289.

TALL INTELLIGENT open minded, upper class male, 53, writer, professional etc at home London/country seeks attractive lady of charm and character for mainly daytime romantic liaison. Discretion paramount. London/Oxford areas. Box 2389.

TALL INTELLIGENT MALE, 33, authoritative yet tender, compelling yet gentle and understanding, seeks feminine ethereal lady for puissant romance tinged with mystery. Box 10589

LONDON BASED, single, slim, presentable, successful male professional in late 50s. Materially well provided but lacking that essential, attractive, sophisticated, female soulmate of any nationality. Telephone number please. Box 10689

YOUNG MAN, 24, ex-Oxford desires older lady for discreet passionate affair. Hants. Box 10789

JANE rid me of this pain, ring again. SIMON

EX TIT 'N' BUM journalist turned bespoke furniture maker, fit, good looking, 44, seeks attractive woman under 40. Manchester based, London visitor. Photo please. Box 10989

PETITE FEMALE 30s seeks male valentine 35+ to share delights sensual and cerebral (Dublin and UK). Box 11089

"Please print this engagement announcement in your magazine. It was through your Eye Love column that we met."
Eye Love Reader

DIVORCED MALE 43, sympathetic, medium build n/s, seeks lady for mutual pleasure. Up to 50 married or single. N/W or Manchester area. Box11289

RECENTLY DIVORCED barrister, 60, (friends mostly in 35-50 bracket) seeks slim bright female of wit and character. London. Box 11389

PROFESSIONAL INDIAN GUY wants to pamper thinking man's crumpet. No race religious or feminist freaks. Box 11489

NOTTINGHAM freelance writer researching Nottm seeks 25035 lovable female guide/companion for initial visits. All answered. Box 11589

HUMOROUS, loving writer/performer, graduate, past forty seeks beautiful, intelligent, affectionate, artistic woman 30ish—40ish for love? marriage? babies? photo please. Box 11689

ASIAN FEMALE 34, professional, seeks unattached Asian male 34-40, London/Midlands. Box 11789

TALL ATTRACTIVE Central London doctor, 50s, dull stable marriage, seeks sensual lady for lunches, matinees, afternoon entertainment. Bilateral discretion essential. Box 11889

SUCCESSFUL stable affectionate artistic batch, 37, requires prof. lady for gin and giggles/mutual enrichment of life (Herts/Cambs). Box 11989

RUGGED ATTRACTIVE
6ft partner in City firm seeks very attractive lady 30-45 to share happy lively life cuddling between London and beamy cottage 30ml north. Enjoy all sports. Write with photo for mine by return.
Box 12089

FIFTY PLUS smallish London female needs fifty plus plus tallish male as regular partner. Could it, perchance, be you, dear reader? Box 3888.

ATTRACTIVE hardworking entrepreneur, young 39, enjoys life's good things, just reascending to the top seeks dynamic positive attractive intelligent gregarious lady. Base East Mids but portable considering European move. Photo tel. no please. Discretion assured. Box 8889.

KIEFIE (IOW) who replied to Box 5483 (male escapologist) write with correct address. Box 9489.

FUNNY, WEALTHY OILMAN, 43,
recently liberated, seeks amusing, pretty girlfriend, central London area. Photo appreciated.
Box 9789

ECCENTRIC American seeks articulate Englishwoman for exchange of ideas, opinions, insights via correspondence; vigourous, open, iconoclastic intellect essential. Box 10289

TROPICAL SUN, sea, sumptuous surroundings, sensual afternoons... Sound interesting? I can get away for 2 or 3 top drawer holidays this year. Come too if you are twenties/thirties, trim, good looking, sensual, fun, and we like each other initially over dinner. I am very male, forties, fit, affectionate, intelligent, successful and after lots of Rose wine with lunch, want to enjoy those long lingering afternoons with you. Discretion assured in necessary. South east. Photo, phone appreciated. Box 10389

VERY GOOD-LOOKING educated upmarket fit safely married male, 45, seeks genuinely attractive safely married woman for discreet relationship. Kensington. Box 10489

ATYPICAL American man, 28, seeking divine Englishwoman for intercontinental letter-writing frenzy. Photo appreciated. Write: JP, 1118C West 10th Street, Austin, Texas, USA 78703 or Box 8389.

LARGE lanky lad, 34, longs for long-legged lass for lascivious times. South. Box 8489.

ATTRACTIVE sensual female likes arts theatre and good conversation, seeks charismatic professional male 50+ of wit and broad horizons for lasting intimacy and friendship. London/Surrey. Box 8589.

HAPPILY married man, thirties, successful, attractive and intelligent, seeks happily married woman who is emotionally literate and — like me — would appreciate the excitement of an occasional but caring and romantic relationship. Photo appreciated, returned and reciprocated. Box 8689.

BLOKE, 40, usual bumph. Seeks lively lady for a discreet and hopefully interesting affair. S Yorks. Box 8789.

SINGLE solvent Sussex doctor non-smoker, 36yrs, christian, generous, affectionate, kind. Likes dining, travel and the outdoors. Seeks single slim petite feminine lady (n/s), blonde, brunette, sparkling personality for mutual support, good conversation and life-long romance. Sussex/Kent area. Details photo, phone no: Box 2089.

INTELLIGENT, professional female, 29, single, n/s, seeks male equivalent for laughter and love. Staffordshire/W Midlands. Box 3289.

YOUNG beautiful, sensual original magical lady seeks enlightened well built professional man for exhilarating romance, 30+. Photo. Box 7389.

ELIGIBLE MAN (34), Oxbridge/Harvard, handsome, well placed in City, seeks beautiful woman with down to earth sophistication for romance. Phone and photo appreciated. Box 7489.

DISILLUSIONED caring professional male, 27, seeks female, any age, for discreet exciting relationship. Photo appreciated. Box 7589.

MASTER BUILDER 41, tall dark haired, blue eyed, intelligent, caring, unattached, desires company of lady under 65 for dining, romance, get togethers, any status, nationality? Box 7689.

PROF MALE, 31, W London, many varied interests seeks attractive caring female for long term relationship. Box 8289.

TROPICAL WINTER holiday. Fun girl (20s) sought by (30s) lawyer. Box 3288.

GOODLOOKING, successful, assertive gentleman with own business, aged 39, seeking goodlooking lady companion with excellent figure, aged under 35 for a fun one-to-one relationship who wishes to enjoy a luxurious lifestyle. Photo and phone number please. Box 9486.

SILVER-GREY TOM 46, divorced, seeks tabby with(out) kittens to love and cherish. Willing to live in the sun. Box 1989.

ATTRACTIVE MALE 38 seeks female for discreet daytime champagne affair. Box 11189

EINSTEIN seeks Essex girl. Box 10889

GOOD LOOKING laconic 33 year old male requires similarly disposed female for carnal relationship. Sense of humour not essential however photo is. Immediate start envisaged for the right woman. London. Box 7789.

MARRIAGE MINDED Englishman, 29 yrs. Box 7889.

LONDON MAN, professional, presentable, 50, seeks bored brunette with sense of humour to enjoy civilised life. Photo appreciated. Box 7989.

PROFESSIONAL, tall, slim, married 40+ n/s, seeks occasional discreet meetings with intelligent interesting likeminded ladies. London. Box 8089.

TWO ATTRACTIVE single brunettes with brains, 30, would like to meet two tall attractive men for a blind date in London! Could be a laugh! Replies with photo please. Box 8189.

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